00027385

BOMBAY BRANCH
OF THE
ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY.
TOWN HALL, BOMBAY.

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 02 January, 2016

THE

APPLICATION

OF

SCRIPTURAL PRINCIPLES

TO

POLITICAL GOVERNMENT:

ESSENTIAL TO THE PIETY, VIRTUE, ORDER, FREEDOM, AND PROSPERITY OF CHRISTIAN STATES.

273

BY

THE REV. PETER MACINDOE, A. M.

CHIRNSIDE.

"There are no politics like those which the Scriptures teach."—MILTON.

"The Bible is my system of politics."—NEWTON.

"Hail sacred Polity, by Freedom reared!
Hail sacred Freedom, when by Law restrained!
Without you, what were man?"—BEATTIE.

EDINBURGH:
THOMAS NELSON AND PETER BROWN.

1831.

35.7
Mac | App
27385

EDINBURGH:
PRINTED BY A. BALFOUR AND CO. NIDDRY STREET.

INTRODUCTION.

THE present is one of the most important eras through which our country has ever passed. A *war of opinions*, more interesting than any of those wars which have, at different times, defended her liberties from invasion, and crowned her warriors with laurels, has been excited to an unprecedented extent. Whether the natural rights of the community, or the arrogant claims of the corporations,—whether the essential principles of equity, or the arbitrary maxims of absolutism, shall gain the ascendency, is the great question which has summoned hosts of combatants from their usual privacy into conflicts that are all but mortal, and fixed on their resolute struggles the eager gaze of the civilized world.

At such a crisis, when the minds of men are bewildered between ancient sophisms on the one hand, and on the other, licentious speculations, it seems an object of no ordinary importance to hold up a *fixed*

standard, around which the friends of truth, religion, and morals may rally with mutual confidence, affection, and ardour. Such a standard is the volume of Revelation,—separated from all the impurities and absurdities by which it has been debased during centuries of superstition, and elevated to that unrivalled supremacy to which it is ever entitled, from the divinity of its origin, the sublimity of its doctrines, and the excellence of its laws. If ever that cloud, that has been gathering in our political heavens for successive years, and that now discharges the muttering thunders that portend the coming hurricane, should burst over these lands, it is that neglected, despised, insulted volume, that will prove the true *polestar* for directing the vessel of the state safe amid the rough waves on which she shall be tossed, and preserving her for more prosperous voyages in those brighter days to which she may be destined.

With regard to the following production, designed,—as the title indicates,—to place political principles on the solid basis of Revelation, I am not inclined to say much. Without pretending indifference to the kind of reception it may meet with, I hope, I am anxious, chiefly, that the *sacred principles* it advocates, connected as they unquestionably are with the best interests of the whole community, should obtain a more candid examination than they have undergone even in this Christian country, and

receive a measure of public favour corresponding to their scriptural authority, and their beneficial tendency.

Should any inquire why I have interwoven such a multiplicity of extracts with the texture of my own composition, I am prepared to justify it on the two following grounds: *first*, because, independently of the intrinsic excellence of these extracts, they are peculiarly apposite to the purposes to which they are applied; and, *second*, because, in arguing political opinions, some of which have been doomed to general odium, and might not obtain a fair hearing on the recommendation of an obscure advocate, it seemed eminently desirable to fortify them, by appropriate quotations from some of the most distinguished divines, moralists, and civilians. There *are* persons, estimable for good qualities, who will occasionally bow to respected authorities, though they will hardly examine formal arguments.

For the freedom with which I have animadverted on the studied indifference of rulers in their political affairs, to the Bible, I am not disposed to offer any apology; because I am not conscious of having committed any wrong. To use the language of Foster, "the writer thinks it is high time for all the advocates of intellectual, moral, and religious improvement, to raise a protesting voice against that policy

of the states denominated Christian, which has, age after age, found every conceivable thing necessary to be done, at all costs and hazards, rather than to enlighten, reform, and refine the people. He thinks, that nothing can more strongly betray a judgment enslaved, or a time-serving dishonesty, in those who would attempt to dictate to such an advocate, and to censure him, than telling him, it is beside his business, and quite out of his sphere, to animadvert on the cause pursued by national authorities, when he sees them not doing that which is the most important of all things to be done for the people over whom they preside, but doing what is in substance and effect the reverse."

CHIRNSIDE,
November 1831.

CONTENTS.

SECTION I.

Page

The Diffusion of Political Knowledge among all Classes of Society, ... 1

SECTION II.

The Standard of Political Government, ... 48

SECTION III.

The Origin of Political Government, ... 107

SECTION IV.

The Distribution of Political Government, ... 162

SECTION V.

The Civil Objects of Government, ... 216

SECTION VI.

The Ecclesiastical Objects of Government, ... 244

SECTION VII.

The Qualifications of Political Rulers, ... 310

SECTION VIII.

The Duties of Citizens, ... 340

SCRIPTURAL PRINCIPLES

APPLIED TO

POLITICAL GOVERNMENT, &c.

SECTION I.

THE DIFFUSION OF POLITICAL KNOWLEDGE AMONG ALL CLASSES OF SOCIETY.

Scarce twenty years have elapsed, since the simple enunciation of this title would have produced, even in this country, very considerable alarm. There figured, about that time, on the arena of public life, a party, who viewed the discussion of political questions, and the diffusion of political intelligence, even through the purest channels, with that uneasy, contemptible, and reprehensible feeling. With matchless effrontery they avowed, that such knowledge was, by right, the exclusive privilege of the higher orders,—that they only were entitled to look into the sacred mysteries of political science, and to examine the great measures of the existing administration,—and that the lower classes, even though they form the decided majority of every civil community, have

no other business with government than unquestioning submission to its laws, implicit approval of its proceedings, and unhesitating payment of its exactions. Happily, that period of insolent dictation on the one hand, and of abject servility on the other, has at length passed away. No man who has any pretensions either to sound judgment or to generous feeling, will *now* stand up in any assembly of his fellow-citizens, and openly declare the growing enlightenment of the people on political topics a public injury. Should there *be* any who really cherish this notion in their breasts, they are compelled, either to heave their sighs in secret without the solace of general sympathy, or to shed their tears in those *select* circles that weep over the dreadful evils of popular education! Nor is it less certain, that should any ministry be so misled as to impose additional restrictions on the press, with the view of averting the progress of free discussion on political subjects, their names would instantly be received over all parts of the country with unmingled execrations, and these very fetters themselves, though forged with noble hands, broken to pieces on their guilty heads, at the earliest possible opportunity.

Impartial historians, living in those enlightened ages of which we now perceive the brightening dawn, will look back on this *horror* of political knowledge with *utter amazement.* Well indeed they may. What harm can accrue from the diligent cultivation of those intellectual powers which the Deity has implanted in our minds, or from an accurate acquaintance with those relations, duties, and privileges

which obtain in political society, or from the general prevalence of those better habits which are the usual consequences, in social life, of mental improvement? If knowledge, in any one department, be an evil from which men should be restrained, then must it be an evil to possess a mind gifted with powers capable of acquiring that knowledge. What a calamity must it be to have a judgment that can discover, a memory that can preserve, and an imagination that can combine into new forms, *such dangerous materials as correct ideas!* What a blessing would it be to have the energies of the intellect merged in the animal frame, the fires of genius quenched in eternal gloom, and the etherial treasures of knowledge, which the wise have hitherto reckoned more precious than gold, dispersed to the four winds! But no. Those rational powers with which our minds have been endowed, are worthy the Supreme Intelligence from whom they have emanated, conducive to the higher purposes of our existence, and deserving the greatest cultivation they are capable of receiving, even in the most favourable circumstances. We *may underrate* the importance of cultivating virtuous dispositions, religious affections, and correct habits, but we *can never overrate* the value of that intellectual education which strengthens our mental faculties, enlarges our useful information, swells the amount of intellectual enjoyment, and extends the power of actual usefulness.

Let not my readers misapprehend the *nature of the subject*, the knowledge of which I consider useful to all classes of mankind. I do not mean merely the more intricate questions in political economy which

have been discussed, with such acuteness, in learned treatises, and to the entire solution of which many persons are not competent, without longer study than they can well afford from their ordinary pursuits. Neither do I mean those *secret* deliberations of cabinets, which particular emergencies require, which are often essential to the successful execution of most important enterprises, and into the *reasons* of which it were impertinent curiosity to inquire, before the time arrives for making a full declaration. Far less do I mean merely the selfish intrigues which have often been managed, with such dexterity, in royal courts, under the name of policy, or the splendid villanies which have often passed, with such eclat, among unprincipled courtiers, under the forms of diplomacy. But I mean chiefly those great principles of social morality which are suggested, to a certain extent, by conscience, and developed, with great clearness, in revelation,—those grand axioms of moral rectitude which wear the indelible impress of the Divinity, command the unqualified approbation of the good, and constitute the true standard of civil polity with which all the maxims and judgments, all the laws and measures of politicians should be tried. A knowledge of such things in their origin and extent, connexions and consequences, I hold to be an invaluable acquirement worthy the ardent curiosity, the unwearied pursuit, the anxious retention, and the faithful application of every people on the face of the earth.

Neither should any imagine, that I inculcate the study of political morality apart from revealed reli-

gion. This unnatural *disunion* has too long prevailed without adequate correction, as well in the speculations of political theorists as in the conduct of practical statesmen. Religion, that religion which purifies, regulates, elevates, ennobles the soul, is an object of pre-eminent importance, deserving the first place in our thoughts and our feelings, our prayers and our exertions. It is the medium by which we pass from the anger of our Creator into his favour, from the punishment of "*everlasting destruction*" into the region of eternal happiness. It is the best defence against the force of irregular passions, the fascination of vicious pleasures, and the contagion of evil example. It affords the purest comfort under the disorders that assail our frames, under the adversities that occur in our affairs, and under the reproaches that are cast on our characters. It yields the greatest support in the hour of death when the soul quits her earthly tenement, relinquishes her temporal privileges, appears in the immediate presence of the divine Judge, and enters, amid loud rejoicings, into the highest heavens, furnished with unmingled pleasures, immortal honours, and exalted associates. Who that has any respect for his true interest, as an immortal being, would wish to remain unacquainted with the obligations, the duties, and the privileges of personal piety? It is well that we value the political body of which we are members during our brief sojourn on earth; but, surely, it is better that we belong to that nobler society, that "*glorious church*," in the high privileges of which we may be participators through a happy eternity.

It is well that we enjoy, with gratitude, the various advantages of the country in which our lot has been cast for a few short years; but, surely, it is better that we hasten, with alacrity, to the nobler immunities of that "*better country*," which can afford our spirits eternal mansions, inexhaustible treasures, and unfading glories.

In this introductory chapter I shall endeavour to show, that *all classes have a right to political knowledge—that various advantages would arise from giving them such knowledge—and that even the most plausible objections alleged against this are totally groundless.*

With regard to the first of these preliminary topics, —*the right of all classes to political knowledge*,—no formal proof is requisite, so far as the higher orders are concerned. No inclination exists in any quarter to refuse *them* the full enjoyment of this important right,—to restrain *them* from examining, with the utmost freedom, the principles of political science,—to exclude *them* from the mystic enclosure within which, till lately, none were permitted to roam but the initiated into the secrets of the national policy. It is in behalf only of the subordinate classes, that a little argumentation seems necessary in this place,—classes, be it remembered, who form the overwhelming majority of the national body, who possess the physical strength that avails in the suppression of internal feuds and the repulsion of foreign attacks, and whose *practical* importance to the public interests no rulers can treat with contempt, for any length of time, with absolute impunity. That *they* possess an inalienable

right to all the political knowledge they can acquire through all the channels to which they have access, will be abundantly evident from the following considerations.

1. *The lower orders, as well as the higher, have been endowed by God with mental faculties, which qualify them, in some measure, for acquiring political knowledge.* He has given them *curiosity*,—a propensity which prompts them to inquire into the leading principles, institutions, and measures of government, which carries them over the difficulties that occasionally obstruct the course of their researches, and which brings them no little pleasure when they have succeeded in securing an accurate acquaintance with those interesting subjects. He has given them *judgment*,—a faculty that can determine the proper standard of political morality, reject false notions, however consecrated by venerable antiquity, and discover true principles, however obscured by learned sophistry. He has given them *memory*,—a faculty which can treasure up, for future use, the knowledge they acquire—recall, for renewed enjoyment, the important results to which former inquiries have led—and preserve, as in a treasury constructed with infinite skill in the human bosom, those stores which previous labours have amassed. Now, who will say, that these original faculties, given them by their Creator for appropriate purposes, should lie dormant on any one subject that has been brought within their compass? Who will plead for the erection of barriers between their minds, endowed with such powers, and the interesting field of political science over which

they have been invited to pass, with immediate pleasure to themselves, in their intellectual excursions? The man who would endeavour to exclude the cheerful light of the sun from their dwellings, the salubrious breezes of the air from their lungs, or the spirit-stirring strains of music, warbled from a thousand throats, from their ears, should not be chargeable with greater arrogance than such an individual,—an individual who would intercept the bright beams of intellectual truth on their passage to the soul, extinguish the generous emotions of sympathy called forth by the exigencies of the social union, and consign injured man to debasing servility and heartless selfishness.

Nor is it enough, that the lower classes be *allowed* to acquire political information. If they would act a part becoming either the rational faculties with which they are gifted, or the solemn account which they must render to the Supreme Judge for the particular opinions they entertain, they should assert their mental independence, along with reasonable deference to the judgments of others more educated, enlightened, and experienced than themselves, and form their political creed by the free exercise of *their own powers* on all the questions presented to their minds. Why, indeed, should they yield implicit assent to the opinions, or unqualified support to the projects, of any order, however exalted, affluent, or powerful? Why should they chain down their minds to the beaten track in which servile inquirers have hitherto trod, and move, with timid step, within the narrow circle which the insolence of interested great-

ness has drawn around them? Why should they hesitate to burst the trammels of erroneous prejudices with which their intellects have been partially bound, and, resuming the liberty of thinking for themselves on all intelligible questions, embrace, after the freest discussion, those *political truths* which are the dictates of eternal wisdom, and the germs of national prosperity? "Intellectual excellence does not consist in passive assent even to the highest truths; or in the most extensive stores of knowledge acquired by an implicit faith, and lodged in the inert memory. It lies in force, freshness, and independence of thought; and is most conspicuously manifested by him who, loving truth supremely, seeks it resolutely, follows the light without fear, and modifies the views of others by the patient strenuous exercise of his own faculties. To a man thus intellectually free, truth is not, what it is to passive multitudes, a foreign substance, dormant, lifeless, fruitless,—but penetrating, prolific, full of vitality, and ministering to the health and expansion of the soul."

2. *The inferior orders, no less than the higher, are members of the civil community.* Residing, from their birth, on the same territory—obeying, in their respective stations, the same laws—and contributing, according to their circumstances, an equal amount of the taxes levied for national purposes,—none will deny, that they are an essential, interesting, and useful part of the national society. Now, it is a general principle, received without limitation by all reasonable men, that all the members of the private societies which have been formed at different periods in this

country,—*literary, scientific, charitable, religious,*— are entitled to the fullest acquaintance with their constitutions, forms, principles, and proceedings. Should any one allege, that those of inferior rank have no just title to this branch of knowledge,—that they should make no inquiries into the wisdom of the rules under which they act, or the legality of the proceedings which the trustees have adopted,—that their only duties are compliance with the various orders issued to all the members, and payment of the several sums demanded for defraying the alleged expenses,—what would be thought of such a person? If any thing could save him from the indignation due to such monstrous audacity, and such presumptuous illiberality, it would be the charitable suspicion that his mind laboured under either natural imbecility or temporary derangement. And shall any allege, that the great body of our citizens, who are members of the national society with their implied consent, who submit to the righteous laws under which they have been placed, contribute their due proportion of the burdens necessary for the public service, and deserve the important privileges for which the social union has been instituted, have no right to examine, in the slightest degree, either the principles of the constitution under which they live, or the measures of the administration which they are required to obey? Will any harbour the humiliating thought, that they have been placed on the soil merely as *animals*, to perform the physical labours essential to the general prosperity,—as *unconscious instruments*, who must not lift their eyes above the secular pursuits in which

they toil, to the political regime under which they reside,—as *living machines*, that must move on, without the slightest murmur, in the prescribed direction along which they are propelled by extraneous power, and accomplish, without the slightest resistance, the laborious processes which terminate in the increasing aggrandizement of other orders? Far from Britons be such a thought.

Surely there are none in this country, at the present moment, so dazzled by the splendour of exalted station, as to allege, that there are any of an origin too low, and of a rank too mean, to aspire, with propriety, to such intelligence. Does not even reason teach, that all men are born on an equal footing as to political rights—that all have by nature the same original powers, intellectual, moral, and physical—that the poor have minds as precious in the sight of God as those of which the rich can boast—that the humble, adorned with religious excellence, have a truer nobility impressed on them than ever favourite received from monarch's hand,—and that the very lowest in society have the same right of private judgment on all topics that fall within the province of the human mind, which has been accorded, in all ages, both to the regular teachers of religion, and the official dealers in politics? In short, they are all citizens; and is it not "just, that every one should have a right to examine those measures by which the happiness of all may be affected?"* They are all partners in the national firm; and is it not proper, that all inquire

* Hall's Apology for the Freedom of the Press, p. 7.

into the speculations that are risked, the profits that are cleared, and the responsible agents that are successively employed? They are all passengers in the vessel of state; and is it not reasonable, that they ask whether the damages that vessel has sustained from violence, carelessness, or time, have been repaired, whether the crew are steady mariners or wretched drunkards, whether they are steering towards the destination they are desirous of reaching, or towards those rocks on which many others have foundered before them?

3. *Every man has a right to acquire as much knowledge, as he can, of his own original constitution.* A royal edict, prohibiting him from inquiring into the various principles of his constitution, would be a literary phenomenon in modern times. It would awaken a simultaneous burst of indignation from all quarters of our land, and prompt the irrepressible exclamation, "what infatuation can have seized the court that has had the madness to issue such an injunction!" It would remind us of those dark ages of stupid intolerance when the bright career of Bacon was interrupted by a sentence of ten years' imprisonment, and the soaring genius of Galileo was crushed by the order which required him, either to recant his splendid discoveries or to suffer an excruciating death. But such an edict *must be* issued, if men are not to study the science of civil polity. They must never examine those original propensities in their own minds from which the social union springs, and on which its primary institutions are founded. They must never admire the social principle that causes

them shrink back from solitude as an unnatural situation—the political sagacity that teaches them many lessons respecting the origin, the objects, and the measures of civil society,—or the moral sentiments that prompt them, prior to all experience, to those mutual duties on which its stability, improvement, and happiness so essentially depend. And what does this amount to, but the extinction of the noble powers which Deity has implanted in the mind, the counteraction of the gracious designs for which he has animated the heart with the social affections, and the conversion of men, who should walk abroad in the erect attitude of immortal beings, into the wretched animals who seek no higher object than their momentary gratifications, and await no other doom than entire dissolution into dust.

Every person, who has paid the smallest attention to the constitution of man, can tell how wonderfully adapted that is to the purposes of society. He can tell of many original affections that cause him enter, with the greatest readiness, into the social union—of many natural rights which he cannot surrender, even to the most virtuous governors, without voluntary self-degradation—of many tender ties which he cannot cut, without inflicting on his heart wounds which no lapse of time can heal—and of many intellectual capacities, the assiduous cultivation of which for the public good, he cannot neglect, without sacrificing a portion of public happiness, the loss of which no private enjoyment can compensate. And must he continue unacquainted with these great gifts of his Creator, because they relate to the political

order of society? Must he turn away his thoughts from these grand principles in his constitution, which have been admired, in all ages, by all who had penetration enough to discern their excellence, their harmony, and their utility? Must he dismiss them, every time they obtrude on his attention, as exalted themes to which plebeian powers are inadequate, or as sacred mysteries into which vulgar eyes must not look? No surely. While he is invited to examine, with the utmost freedom, the properties of all other objects that have been placed within his reach; while the structure of the globe, the composition of the atmosphere, the sublime scenery of the heavens studded with innumerable orbs, and the infinite nature of the Deity dwelling amid unapproachable splendours, are subjects, of which the knowledge is accounted an invaluable acquirement, it were strange, indeed, if any part of his *own constitution* were an object, into which he must never institute the smallest inquiry, and with which he must never cultivate the slightest acquaintance.

4. *Every person has an inalienable right to read, study, and interpret for himself, the sacred writings.* Such a right, I am aware, when exercised by an inquisitive people, will, almost unavoidably, lead to a multitude of ridiculous opinions—a mass of crude, inconsistent, and dangerous expositions. Yet it were unreasonable to discard an important privilege, merely because it has been abused through the ignorance, incapacity, and vanity of individuals. This were to rob man of one of his greatest rights—to wrest from him one of his noblest prerogatives. This were to

degrade him to the worst of slavery, generated by political usurpation and priestly intolerance. This were to revive those times—times that can never be recalled without a blush—when searching the Scriptures in the vernacular tongue was a crime not to be expiated but by the blood of the offender—when the exercise of private judgment was prohibited under the severest penalties,—and when the slightest innovation in established errors, and ancient abuses, was the signal for the most sanguinary persecution. Who would wish such times restored, especially after enjoying the precious privileges accruing from the unrestricted exercise of their faculties, and the unlimited examination of the Scriptures? Yet some such prohibition against the study of the Scriptures *must be* issued, if they are not allowed to investigate political subjects. They cannot open that volume without meeting, in almost every separate piece of writing of which it consists, with political principles—that is, moral rules applicable to the conduct of states, both in their domestic affairs, and their foreign relations. *There* are described, with various degrees of explicitness, not indeed the minutest details of civil polity, but the great ends for which it is instituted, the principal qualifications of political rulers, the chief duties which they owe to the community over which they preside, the corresponding duties of citizens to the rulers whom they have entrusted with power, and a variety of other principles, the faithful application of which would produce the happiest effects in every department of civil society. Now, must readers, in examining their Bibles, pass over all those passages in which such principles are stated, or illustrated, or ex-

exemplified? Must they hurry forward, with trembling haste, to those other passages that treat only of private duties, of ecclesiastic privileges, or of spiritual blessings, lest they should catch the spirit of scriptural politics,—just as the frightened traveller advances with breathless rapidity from the "*lions crouching*" till he has reached the open country where he is safe from their overwhelming attacks? That were most presumptuous towards God; for, surely, whatever truths he has been pleased to reveal in that inestimable book, it is their duty to receive with warm affection, to study with unwearied care, to treasure up in their remembrance with lasting gratitude, and to maintain, by all rational means, with unceasing fidelity. Rather than drop, with deliberate design, one truth from the glorious system that has been sent down from heaven, and that brings the choicest blessings from the great source of all felicity, they should be willing to part with their hands, their eyes, even their lives, should the costly sacrifice be required by the inscrutable providence of their Heavenly Father. No less injurious should it be to themselves; for, surely, all the principles laid down in the Scriptures, to whatever science they belong, are fitted to make them wiser, purer, and happier, to exalt their minds above the power of low pursuits, sensitive pleasures, and transitory objects, to re-establish in their hearts the dominion of pious emotions, virtuous affections, and heavenly aspirations, and to diffuse over their whole conduct that moral rectitude which constitutes the secret of private happiness and the spring of national prosperity. "*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for re-*

*proof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."**

Nor is it enough, that the people be allowed to search the political parts of the Scriptures even in their own language. Constituted intelligent and moral beings, they have a right to *judge of the meaning* annexed to them, in the full exercise of their own faculties, and the liberal use of those *helps* that have been furnished by former inquirers. This is a right they have received from God, which they enjoy under his immediate control, which they themselves cannot give away without putting a fearful stigma on their own understandings, nor suffer others to take, without yielding a tame submission from the very thought of which they ought to shrink. "Who," might the very humblest individual ask, "who will fix the precise interpretations that I should prefer, the political sentiments that I should adopt, without intolerable arrogance, even though the fairest mitre, or the richest diadem in Christendom encircled his brow? However humble my rank, however limited my acquirements, I claim unimpaired the imprescriptible right of judging for myself on political as on all other opinions. Deny me *this*, you encroach on a prerogative which my Maker has made sacred, which my Redeemer has guaranteed, which my responsibility involves, and without which the happiness of intellectual exertion must for ever cease. Deny me *this*, you draw a dark veil over my mind's eye, without which the intellec-

* 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17.

tual powers are inactive, the moral principles dormant, and those visual orbs that embrace, within their range, the variegated beauties of the earth, and the splendid glories of the heavens, have been granted in vain. Deny me *this*, you impose on me a spiritual despotism more galling than ever ground wretched slave to the dust,—a despotism the more vexatious, that it tyrannizes over, not my property, the felonious abstraction of which I could endure with patience, nor my body, the actual torture of which I might suffer with fortitude, under divine assistance; but my *mind*, the oppressive restrictions on which paralyze its noblest energies, extinguish its purest emotions, impede its holiest excursions, and leave it shrunk and shrivelled, the sport of grovelling passions and ignoble projects. If you *will* tyrannize over me, take my property, it is a precarious possession exposed to a thousand accidents; take my body, it is a material frame doomed to inevitable dissolution; but leave untouched my mind, which, in my estimation, is a spirit a thousand times more precious than the perishable structure in which it now dwells, than the finest temple ever made with hands, or even than this spacious and magnificent universe."

Having proved the right of public discussion on all political questions, I would next specify a few of the advantages that might accrue from the more general diffusion of political knowledge throughout the community. I allude not merely to the direct pleasure they should enjoy in the *actual* pursuit of such knowledge. There should, indeed, accrue to their minds, from the free exercise of their intellectual

powers, from the unrestrained excursions they would take over new regions of useful inquiry, and from the successive additions they would make to their previous stock of knowledge, an immediate pleasure that should more than remunerate their most laborious efforts, by withdrawing them from the power of external objects, by raising them above low pursuits, by bringing them into communion with superior minds, and by exalting them to intellectual excellence, as superior to the pitiable degradation of an ignorant population as the tranquil heavens above our heads are to the troubled earth beneath our feet. I allude, however, to the *ultimate* advantages they might derive, rather than to the *direct* pleasures, and would suggest the following as the more prominent that have occurred to my mind ruminating on this topic.

1. *Political knowledge would prepare them for performing, in an intelligent and virtuous manner, the duties of citizenship.* Moralists teach, that none of our actions can be accounted virtuous, unless they spring from pure principles in the heart, governed by correct views in the understanding. It is the state of the mind—the seat of all moral feeling—that gives them their distinctive character, as objects either of human praise or of divine approbation. Without having our minds informed, we may act from good intentions; but we can have little claim to the merit of enlightened patriotism, enlarged benevolence, discriminating loyalty. If, then, a large portion of society are doomed to utter unacquaintance with political truths, through impolitic restrictions on the press, how can they discharge their political duties

in a manner, either acceptable to the Deity who requires from them "*a reasonable service*," or pleasing to good men who are prompted, by their original constitution, to approve of outward acts according to the internal principles in which they have originated? Beclouded with ignorance, they must be sadly degraded agents, impelled only by their blind passions which have themselves been excited by the base tricks of designing superiors—mere mechanical instruments, wielded only by extraneous power altogether irreconcilable with moral action, and applied often to public purposes, which, a little sound instruction might teach them, are equally unworthy a rational citizen, and an upright ruler. Let me illustrate this remark by a few examples.

Citizens owe obedience to the civil authorities whom they have placed over their national affairs. But how can that obedience be *virtuous*, if they are unacquainted with their political relations, with the inward sentiments of affection, respect, and reverence they should entertain towards their rulers, with the external demonstrations of submission which they should give with cordial alacrity and exemplary promptitude? It is only they who see in government a divine institution sent down from heaven, in rulers the approved deputies of the Supreme Potentate, in laws the bright image of the moral precepts inculcated in the Bible, and in obedience, a service recommended, not merely by the voice of conscience in every virtuous bosom, but by the explicit requirements of the inspired volume,—it is only they whose obedience, flowing from the purest motives,

possesses those good qualities which command the highest approbation.

Citizens, likewise, owe civil tribute. But, how are they to pay this, in their respective proportions, with due conscientiousness, unless their minds are previously instructed respecting the origin, the end, and the obligations of this duty? Beclouded with ignorance, they will, assuredly, give full scope to their imaginations, which may conjure up the worst suspicions respecting the extravagance of government; or they will fall under the insidious artifices of unprincipled demagogues, who will urge them, with ease, to any outrages subservient to their own selfish designs; or they will, warmed with the fervours of a mistaken loyalty, submit to any exactions imposed on them, till they sink under commercial embarrassments, if not in political slavery. That they may be fitted to pay tribute with that cheerfulness with which every moral duty should be performed, to contribute without grudging that amount which the varying exigencies of the public service require, and determine, with some degree of precision, the point at which they are warranted, by a regard to the national welfare, to lift the voice of strenuous, unanimous, and unceasing remonstrance against the *excess* of taxation, it is requisite that they be informed on the general principles and leading designs of good government.

Another duty required from citizens is the election of their representatives. But, how can they fulfil this duty in a way either creditable to their own judgment, or consistent with their high respon-

sibility, or conducive to the public interests, unless they have been previously enlightened? If they are unacquainted with the duties that a representative should perform, with the principles on which he should act, with the qualifications he should possess, and with the fixed standard by which the morality of all his official acts and declared sentiments should be tried, how is it possible to avoid making an *injudicious* choice? Should they choose one either fit for the high trust which they delegate, or worthy the distinguished honour which they confer, this is the effect, not of rational deliberation and virtuous determination, but of blind impulse, of mere accident. But the probability is, that they give their suffrages to one of a very different character, one who possesses art enough to work on their uninstructed passions, money enough to gratify their sordid desires, and dishonesty enough to call forth their unmeasured applauses by liberal promises which he does not mean ever to redeem. And thus it is, that the extension of the elective franchise to those of the lower orders who have not been instructed in the use which they should make of this political privilege becomes, in many cases, an evil—an evil which has often disgraced many parts of our own country with sickening scenes of dissipation, venality, and perjury—an evil which has brought into unmerited disrepute, among good men, a political right which their strenuous endeavours should be used to recover from the grasp of the dominant few, and which has furnished to the enemies of parliamentary reform a specious pretext, of which a little candour

should make them ashamed. Instead, however, of withholding this right from a single individual to whom political justice requires its immediate extension, a wise, a virtuous, and patriotic government would prefer *bringing up* the minds of the people to a just conception and due estimate of the duties which it involves, by enlarging the means of general education, by removing the taxes that have hitherto narrowed the circulation of political journals, and by expending, on the gratuitous distribution of appropriate publications, a few of the thousands which are now given from the treasury to a multitude of undeserving pensioners, most of whom are but "the drones of the hive, the lifeless living, the unburied dead."

2. *Political knowledge would contribute to the subordination, the quiet, and the good order of the community.* No doubt, should government avow arbitrary maxims, perpetuate unjust laws, and pursue measures injurious to the great interests they are bound to protect, cultivate, and extend; a magnanimous people would view these *evils* with a measure of dissatisfaction exactly proportionate to the measure of enlightenment which they had previously received. But, in this case, should the country ring with irrepressible clamours, and society totter with general convulsions, in whose conduct is the guilt found, and on whose head must the blame rest? Not, surely, on that of the injured community, who have only reprobated evils that deserve reprobation from virtuous men of all parties; but on that of their rulers, who have produced these evils with an infatuation

that usually indicates either great mental incapacity, or great political corruption. Let them abolish these evils as speedily as they can, with a view to the general good of the country, irrespective of *partial* interests; and then, the more intelligent the people are, the warmer approbation will they cherish, the steadier support yield, and the truer loyalty manifest. Such a people, having their minds informed, can appreciate the patriotic acts no less than the good qualities of their rulers,—can estimate the salutary changes effected in the political system under which they live, by their sagacity,—can allow for the peculiar difficulties they encounter in carrying good measures against an array of selfish passions,—can sympathize with them under reproaches which they sustain from the malignity of disappointed factions,—can overlook the lesser errors into which they are occasionally betrayed by mistaken views, or by injudicious advice,—can distinguish the virtuous patriots who address their understandings with rational arguments, from the turbulent demagogues who rouse their passions by furious declamation,—and, amid the various calamities that afflict their country, can easily discriminate those which have been occasioned by causes operating in their own moral condition from those which may be attributed, with obvious justice, to the impolicy of the existing administration. In short, *they* are easily kept in a state of uninterrupted tranquillity, even without the brute force to which absolute governments have habitual recourse; while a people, whose political instruction has been wholly neglected, are ready, at all times, for the grossest

outrages to which they may be urged, either by the irregular passions which rage within their own bosoms, or by the ingenious artifices employed by popular leaders.

Of these remarks, the truth of which might have been argued from the original principles of human nature, we cannot seek a more impressive illustration than occurs in the present condition of the *three* kingdoms. Look to England; there, during the last six months, unprecedented outrages have been committed, in several counties, on a scale that should make Britons blush—the violation of personal security, the burning of agricultural produce, and the destruction of useful machinery. Could such evils have taken place, under any sufferings whatsoever, if the peasantry, who have been the guilty actors, had enjoyed the advantages of early education, and of moral instruction, in which political truth holds an important place? No, assuredly. Furnished with an ordinary measure of enlightenment, they would have borne their privations with submission to the divine will, respected the sacred rights of their fellow-citizens, and, instead of plunging into excesses which have brought on their character a stain that years of good behaviour cannot wipe away, would have persevered in virtuous measures which might have secured them redress of the grievances under which they are labouring. Look next to Ireland; from that fine country scarce a breeze blows but wafts over rumours of riots and outrages, atrocious cruelties and barbarous murders, tumultuous assemblies in the capital, and sanguinary encounters in the provinces. Indeed, every succes-

sive account shows, that that country is on the eve of some tremendous crisis, of which the proximate causes have been long operating, and the immediate consequences will be long felt. Could such evils ever have occurred, in the degree to which they have grown, and with the ferocity by which they are characterised, if proper attention had been given to the elementary education and sound instruction of the interesting population? Would it have been possible for any individuals, even by the most insidious stratagems and the most touching eloquence, to have roused them to such acts of mischievous turbulence as they are committing, and engaged them in projects of such questionable utility as they are pursuing? Assuredly not.—From such disgraceful scenes turn to our own ancient kingdom—a kingdom that has enjoyed, from an early period, the envied system of parochial schools, the extensive diffusion of useful books, and a great measure of various intelligence, which, circulated through channels to which the very humblest of our citizens have access, has raised our people to an unequalled rank in the scale of intellectual improvement. And what is the gratifying consequence? Under the pressure of mercantile reverses which have seldom been paralleled, and infringements on their political rights which they hold sacred, they are, at the present moment, pursuing their useful callings in quietness, yielding becoming obedience to the constituted authorities, and reflecting on the gross outrages that disgrace the sister kingdoms, not with the vicious sympathy that would fill their mouths with applauses,

but with the virtuous shame that crimsons their countenances with blushes. Never let it be forgotten by ourselves, by our countrymen, by the guardians of the public weal, that all this quiet, order, industry, and subordination are the effects of those superior means of popular instruction which our country has enjoyed during successive centuries. "But for these, the mountain scenery of our land would have still been the abode of ignorant, and rugged, and ruthless men. The spirit of dark and desperate hostility would still have been breathed against us by its people; and our peaceful plains would have still, as in days of old, lain open to the fury of lawless and merciless invaders. It is the operation of these bequests of reforming times, that has lulled to sleep the fiery passions of the Scottish mountaineer,—that has soothed the elements of revenge which, long time, rankled in his breast,—that has softened down the fierceness of the lion to the gentleness of the lamb,—that, in short, has changed the impetuosity of minds which were once as rugged as the craggy cliff, and impelled by torrents of passion as boisterous as the mountain stream, into the stillness of the lake that sleeps softly in the valley."*

3. *Political knowledge would afford them the best defence against the loss or the violation of their political rights.* "The most capital advantage an enlightened people can enjoy," says Hall, "is the liberty of discussing every subject which can fall within the compass of the human mind: while this remains

* Mackray's Essay on the Reformation, pp. 225, 226.

freedom will flourish; but should it be lost or impaired, its principles will neither be well understood nor long retained. The control of the public mind over the conduct of ministers, exerted through the medium of the press, has been regarded by the best writers, both in our country and on the continent, as the main support of our liberties. While this remains we cannot be enslaved; when it is impaired or diminished, we shall soon cease to be free."* "As every subject," affirms Blackstone, "is interested in the preservation of the laws, it is incumbent on every man to be acquainted with those at least with which he is immediately concerned; lest he incur the censure, as well as inconvenience, of living in society without knowing the obligations which it lays him under. And thus much may suffice for persons of inferior condition, who have neither time nor capacity to enlarge their views beyond that contracted sphere in which they are appointed to move. But those on whom nature and fortune have bestowed more abilities and greater leisure, cannot be so easily excused. These advantages are given them, not for the benefit of themselves only, but also of the public; and yet they cannot, in any scene of life, discharge properly their duty either to the public or themselves, without some degree of knowledge in the laws."†

One great advantage possessed by an enlightened community is, that they can oppose *timous resistance to the encroachments of domestic tyranny.* Having

* Apology for the Freedom of the Press, pp. 2-7

† Commentaries on the Laws of England. Vol. i. 6, 7.

the eyes of their minds opened, *they* can descry, even in their distant approaches, the dangers that threaten their rights; can discern, under the thickest cloak, the secret enemies that infringe upon their privileges; can detect, in the first stage, the insidious malady that would consume the very vitals of their political constitution. Attached to their liberties, *they* can discover, in an instant, the base artifices hatched in courts for the purpose of overturning them; nor are great pains necessary to persuade them that, when the crown acquires increasing influence, the courts assume unconstitutional powers, and arbitrary acts of the Privy Council supersede the established laws that have emanated from the legislature, elements are working which, unless checked, will involve them, at no distant period, in all the evils of political slavery. I question if history has recorded a more striking illustration of this observation, than that which was furnished, in this northern kingdom, during the troubled years that ushered in the revolution. Then a band of Christian heroes, before they took up arms against their oppressor, *stated clearly* the precise grounds on which they were justified in disowning the government, the legitimate measures they used for defending their inalienable privileges, the constitutional terms on which they would submit to the rulers whom Providence had placed over them, and a number of other important principles which were adopted by the national convention, at the close of the grand struggle. Now, had they been totally unacquainted with politics, could they have acted in this rational manner for the noble end which they had conceived?

Could the humblest peasants have defended their opinions with the singular ability that astonished the bishops, and confounded the judges? Could the youngest ministers have vindicated the sacred principles for which they were arraigned, with that instructive eloquence that shook the throne to its foundations, made unprincipled courtiers tremble in their palaces mid scenes of boisterous revelry, and fired with burning emotions the spirits of thousands embarked in the holiest of causes? No. It was their knowledge of the great truths of scriptural polity that made them so intrepid, consistent, and persevering; that sustained their minds under sanguinary cruelties, from which the majority shrunk; that impelled them to heroic struggles, borne with the confidence of ultimate triumphs; and rendered them instrumental in bringing about, at a very critical period, a revolution, of which the happy effects have been long enjoyed in our own land, and the beneficial influence has at length extended over the rest of the civilized world.

Equally necessary is a measure of political intelligence to qualify the people *to resist with energy the violence of foreign aggression.* No doubt, there have been examples of nations raised very little above the rude customs of savages, who have made wonderful efforts in defending their political independence. With a burst of enthusiasm, in which fanaticism and loyalty were the chief elements, have they rushed forth from their dwellings at the first signal, thrown themselves with irresistible fury on the daring assailants, and even repulsed, by their fierce charges, the

disciplined troops that had been poured down on their plains by more civilized states. But what were their predominating principles? Only a blind attachment to the country in which they had grown up, without any regard to the privileges that render country a home; an ignorant loyalty to the warrior-chief to whom they were bequeathed by his predecessor, without the affectionate allegiance that renders loyalty a virtue; and an animal courage displayed in barbarous atrocities, without that moral heroism that calls forth genuine admiration in the bosoms of the good. Surely, it must be humiliating to have our country defended by men degraded beneath the dignity of rational beings; men who sacrifice their intellect to the power of irregular appetites, and malevolent passions; men who trample on their consciences, by implicit submission to all orders, however contrary to the rules of moral rectitude; men who engage in every service on which they are sent, without considering the ends for which it has been projected, who wade to military honour through seas of blood, without regarding either the moral feelings that should govern their minds, or the solemn responsibility under which they are laid for all their present actions, and who pursue their bloody career with as little *rationality* as the vessels that ride upon the billows encompassing our coasts, or the forts that hurl destruction on the enemy landing on our shores. Are these the defenders in whose *mechanical* efforts a nation should confide, when its liberties are assailed, either by intestine feuds, or by external force?

" What constitutes a state?
Not high-raised battlement, or labour'd mound,
Thick wall, or moated gate;
Not cities proud with spire and turret crown'd:
Not bays and broad-armed ports,
Where, laughing at the storm, rich navies ride:
Not starred and spangled courts,
Where low-brow'd baseness wafts perfume to pride.
No: Men, high-minded men,
With powers as far above dull brutes endued
In forests, brake, or den,
As beasts excel cold rocks and brambles rude:
Men who do their *duties* know,
But know their *rights*, and knowing dare maintain,
Prevent the long-aimed blow,
And crush the despot, while they rend the chain;
These constitute a state." *

4. *Political knowledge would qualify them for exerting a salutary influence in improving their political system.* Under no constitution, with whatever judgment its articles have been selected, are a community warranted to neglect the process of *reform.* Doubtless, were their constitution perfect, with great propriety might they resist the changes that politicians recommend, denounce the spirit of innovation that agitates the whole structure of society, and spurn from them all the alterations proposed as the dreams of visionary theorists. But, since it includes various imperfections corresponding with those of the original framers,—since observation proves that it has corruptions which should be removed, and defects that should be supplied,—since by the progress of the human mind new truths have been elicited and antiquated errors detected,—since the abolition of abuses

* Sir W. Jones.

would increase the happiness of the community, by answering their reasonable desires, and promoting their real interests,—since the removal even of a single grievance may dry up the source of a thousand discontents bursting daily on our ears in loud complaints,—and since the passing even of a single good law may augment the general happiness to a degree that shall diffuse cordial rejoicings over all parts of the country, should not every people be prepared to make those alterations in the system of polity which are suggested, by the advancement of political science, and the course of political affairs? But, how are they qualified to urge these salutary reforms, if they have never sought a tolerable acquaintance with the subject of civil government, nor examined the practical details submitted to their inspection in the existing administration? It is sickening to hear the *ignorant* recommending *their* crude ideas as the dictates of superior wisdom, and urging *their* visionary projects as the fruits of intelligent patriotism.

One way in which a community contributes to the improvement of their political system is *making a judicious, temperate, and persevering use of the right of petitioning*. But, does not *this* presuppose an accurate acquaintance with the various topics they bring forward, under different forms, in their petitions? If they are, in great measure, unacquainted with these vital topics,—if they know not the general articles of the civil polity under which they have been born, the gradual improvements that might be introduced into it with advantage, and the impolitic enactments that should be swept away without undue

delay,—if they are so ignorant as to charge their rulers with calamities which have sprung from causes over which their rulers could have no power, and as to clamour for alterations which, were they made, would bring upon themselves commercial troubles from which they are now exempted, it is perfectly evident, their written remonstrances, however patriotic the spirit they breathe, however nervous the style in which they are expressed, and however unwearied the perseverance with which they are urged, are not worth the parchment on which they are engrossed. It is only petitions specifying real grievances, recommending salutary changes, and abounding in correct statements that cannot be questioned, and sound arguments that cannot be refuted,—that are fitted to exert, on the minds of rational legislators, an influence which they cannot always resist, and to carry public measures conducive to the great interests of the country. Of what importance then is it, that accurate information be circulated, to the widest extent possible, through all the channels that the *art of printing* can supply? "We may venture to predict, with confidence," says Professor Stewart, "that, in every country, *it* will gradually operate to widen the circle of science and civilization; to distribute more equally, among all the members of the community, the advantages of the political union; and to enlarge the basis of equitable governments, by increasing the number of those who *understand their value*, and are interested to defend them. The science of legislation, too, with all the other branches of knowledge which are connected with human im-

provement, may be expected to advance with rapidity; and, in proportion as the opinions and institutions of men approach to truth and justice, they will be secured against those revolutions to which human affairs have always been hitherto subject. *Opinionum enim commenta delet dies, naturæ judicia confirmat.*" *

Another way in which a community are warranted to remove gross evils from their political system is, that *last resource,—a revolution.*† But, unless they have been instructed in the leading principles and great ends of government, how are *they* to determine, with any measure of certainty, whether the political *crisis* that warrants this terrible experiment has actually arrived? What capacity have *they* to decide, whether their present sufferings accrue from gross misrule or from popular guilt; whether their political oppressions are the effects of temporary causes or of constitutional disorders; whether, supposing the crazy fabric of despotism thrown down, they could erect on its ruins a happier system; and a great variety of other difficult questions, a correct answer to which they

* Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind. Vol. i. pp. 267, 268.

† Blackstone, after discussing the three great and primary rights of every Englishman,—*personal security, personal liberty, and private property,* and enumerating the auxiliary rights "which serve principally as barriers to protect these inviolate," adds the following declaration:—"The last auxiliary right of the subject, is that of having arms for their defence, suitable to their condition and degree, and such as are allowed by law. Which is also declared by the same statute, I. William and Mary, statute ii. c. 2, and is indeed a public allowance, under due restrictions, of the natural right of resistance and self-preservation, when the sanctions of society and laws are found insufficient to restrain the violence of oppression." Vol. i. 143, 144.

should be able to give, before they are warranted to resist, by arms, the encroachments of tyranny? It is frightful to think of an ignorant populace, in a moment of violent excitement, pronouncing judgment on such grave matters; awarding censure where perhaps a little enlightenment would have shown much that was worthy of praise; kindling the flames of civil war for reforms which the tranquil course of public opinion might have accomplished; and plunging into those sanguinary atrocities which have never failed to pollute and disgrace the revolutions which have been effected by *uninstructed* multitudes. Let them be furnished with a competent measure of sound instruction, and they will carry into effect any revolution that sound policy requires without *these* terrible atrocities; recover their just rights without paying the usual price, much innocent blood; cause the thrones of their guilty oppressors tremble without firing a single cannon; and become, not only the intrepid assertors of the national liberties which they value, but the generous deliverers of the infatuated rulers whom they despise.* "This general augmen-

* The beneficial influence of political enlightenment appears very conspicuous in the late revolutions which have occurred in several continental kingdoms, especially in that which broke out with such enthusiasm in France. "Why," asks an eloquent young statesman, "why is it that, a nation which, about thirty years ago, appeared a body of maniacs and assassins, has now, under nearly similar circumstances, shone forth an assemblage of heroes and philosophers? Wherefore is it that, the flames have burst forth as suddenly as before, but instead of spreading themselves, as before, in all the fury of havoc and desolation, burn only to preserve and to purify? Whence is it that, the winds, once more released from their imprisonment, do not again ravage and terrify the earth, but only breathe peace, and blessing, and harmony? Why is it, that the car of liberty rolls

tation of sense and right principle, would," says Foster, " send forth, against all arrangements and inveterate or more modern usages, of the nature of invidious exclusion, arbitrary repression, and the debasement of great public interests into a detestable private traffic, an energy which would no more be resisted than the power of the sun, when he advances in the spring to annihilate the relics and vestiges of the winter. This plastic influence would modify the institutions of the national community, to a state adapted to secure all the popular rights, and to convey the genuine, collective opinion, to bear directly on the counsel and transaction of national concerns. That opinion would have a weight which would not be set at defiance, and an unperishable fidelity of manifestation which would leave no possibility of affecting to take any other as the expression of the popular mind. If the ideas concerning popular rights have come into the minds of the people before the proper time, that is to say, before they were prepared to judge rationally of those rights, and to apprehend clearly the duties inseparable from them as a condition of their enjoyment, the calamitous consequence to the higher classes, as seen in the recent history of Europe, may be regarded as a righteous judgment of heaven upon them, for having suffered it to be *possible* for these

on with the same apparent violence as formerly, but that its wheels do not again take fire with the rapidity of their own revolution? I can tell you why this has happened. The people who have achieved this glorious work, had, for some years, enjoyed, though in a restrained and imperfect degree, the benefit of constitutional liberty, of popular rights, of a FREE PRESS."—*Right Hon. Robert Grant, Judge Advocate-General.*

new ideas of liberty and rights to come upon the people in a state so unprepared. What were all their commanding authorities of government, their splendid ecclesiastical establishments, their great personal wealth and influence, all their lofty powers and distinctions which even their basest sycophants, sacerdotal or poetical, in their most fulsome adulations, told them they were not entrusted with for their own gratification; what were all these for, if the great body of the communities over which they presided were to be retained in a state in which they could not be touched by a few bold speculations in favour of popular rights, without exploding us with infernal fire? How appropriate a retribution of sovereign justice, that those who were wickedly the cause should be the victims of the effect?"*

Such are a few of the important advantages that should accrue from the wider diffusion of political intelligence through all ranks of the community. Before concluding this introductory chapter, it may not be improper to notice three of the leading objections that have been taken to the patriotic object to which it is devoted.

1. *By some it has been objected, that the lower orders are not competent to examine political subjects.* Now, within certain limits the objection may be admitted. In the difficult science of politics there are some abstruse principles which very few can understand, without longer study and greater reading than they have time to bestow. There are also occasional

* Essay on the Evils of Popular Ignorance, pp. 242, 244, 245.

measures adopted in the Cabinet, of which, during their progress in that court, they can neither discover the real causes nor conjecture the intended objects. But, surely, there are general principles, settled axioms, revealed laws, an acquaintance with which lies within the reach even of their humble faculties, and inferior opportunities. Would they apply their minds to these topics with the same care with which they ruminate on others; would they consult, with attention, the approved writings of which a copious supply have been furnished them in modern times; and would they improve, with diligence, the precious leisure which they do save from their daily pursuits and their nocturnal sleep, I venture to predict, they should acquire a degree of political knowledge that would reflect the highest honour on their mental endowments, raise them above the grosser pleasures of sense, qualify them for the higher duties of citizenship, and might even put to the blush some of those flippant *representatives* who find their way to seats in the senate, with an ignorance of Parliamentary duties and national jurisprudence that draws down upon them, from their enlightened compeers, unmingled contempt.

There is, I must allow, an amazing difference, in many cases, between the intellectual attainments of the lower and the higher classes. But this difference is not *essential*—it is wholly *adventitious*. "The same faculties of reasoning, the same seeds of taste, the same sparks of wit and fancy are discoverable in those of low as in them of high condition. Their ignorance is not owing to stupidity of intellect, but

to want of culture. Had they whose irreligious principles and vicious conduct we now so severely reprobate and so justly deplore, been blessed with the advantages of early instruction and virtuous example, they might have been at this hour the very reverse of what they now are, ornaments to religion, and blessings to the community. Yes, many of these whom our pride would lead us to class in the number of barbarians, had they enjoyed the opportunities and the privileges with which we have been favoured, might, not improbably, have made a far better use of them than we have done, and might as much have excelled us as we now imagine ourselves to excel them. Many a one who cannot read what others wrote, had the knowledge of elegant letters been given him, would doubtless himself have written what ages might have read with delight and admiration. Nature has made more generals than have headed armies, more philosophers than have taught, more orators than have harangued, and more poets than have sung.

> "Full many a gem of purest ray serene,
> The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear:
> Full many a flower is doomed to blush unseen,
> And waste its sweetness in the desert air."

Nor let any aver, that all the knowledge they can acquire is but of small amount. *Limited as it is, it is better than none.* In acquiring *it*, they enjoy a pleasure far superior to what they could ever derive from bodily indulgencies—improve their intellectual faculties,—exalt their moral affections,—and extend the bounds of their political usefulness, by rendering available for the public service all the native talent

with which they have been endowed. It is a miserable sophism which interested alarmists so often repeat, and credulous dupes so readily believe, that "a little knowledge is a dangerous thing." When the traveller, fainting from hunger in the barren desert, cannot procure the rich viands that covered his table every day in his native land, is it *dangerous* to receive the meaner fare placed within his reach by a kind providence, and sufficient to sustain life during the remaining part of his journey? When the labourer, confined to the fruits of manual exertion in some humble pursuit, cannot acquire the riches that would furnish him with the rarest luxuries and the greatest splendours, is it *dangerous* to accept the scanty income that purchases the means of comfortable subsistence and honourable independence? No more is it dangerous to the inferior classes, precluded by their situation from acquiring an extensive knowledge of political truths, to accept the limited portion which they *can* acquire under their unfavourable circumstances—a portion which furnishes agreeable occupation to their minds, elevates their faculties above low pursuits, detaches their passions from grovelling objects, and exalts their minds to higher pleasures than they could ever derive from rioting in boisterous merriment, or languishing in ignoble sloth.

2. *Equally groundless is the objection, that diffusing political information among the people would render them turbulent.* Candour, no doubt, constrains me to admit, that such knowledge does not, in all cases, produce a corresponding measure of

public virtue. If the moral propensities are not cultivated as well as the intellectual powers—if religious principles are not fostered as well as political maxims —if virtuous habits are not acquired with the same assiduity which they employ in learning speculative truths, then have we no security against the improper purposes to which they, misled by depraved passions, may turn their knowledge. There is great danger, in such cases, of knowledge rendering them either turbulent demagogues, or trembling slaves—either base flatterers of the multitude, or servile supporters of the throne. But granting this, it is still true that the tendency of knowledge is to increase virtue—of intellectual cultivation to promote moral excellence. Let a people be accustomed to exercise their minds with tolerable frequency in useful reading and rational thinking, they will, evidently, realize a degree of intellectual pleasure which shall strengthen their moral feelings, refine their grosser passions, restrain them from the haunts of dissipation, and exalt them to one of those intellectual eminences from which they can look down, with contempt, on the frivolous gratifications from which they have ascended, and, with pity, on the grovelling cotemporaries with whom they once herded.

That an intelligent people are *necessarily* discontented, is an opinion that does not seem very obvious from *reason*. Doubtless, if the rulers are neglecting the chief objects for which they have been entrusted with office—if they are pursuing public measures most injurious to the national interests over which they preside,—if they are obstructing the channels

of commercial enterprise by impolitic regulations, and squandering the public resources on wars undertaken for other ends than the defence of their own country, then, assuredly, such a people will express their dissatisfaction in no equivocal terms, uttered with no faultering voice. But are they to be blamed for this? If you rob a man of his substance acquired by honourable industry, must he not complain of your injustice, under whatever form it has acted? If you grind a man to the dust with burdens which you have imposed in utter violation of moral equity, must he not breathe a single whisper about your cruelty, under whatever pretext this has been exercised? And if rulers extort from the community larger sums than are necessary to the real exigencies of the *state*, though they are useful in paying worthless favourites,—if they sacrifice the great interests of the country at the shrine of their own selfish passions, to which they have become corrupt slaves, must the community give no utterance to the sentiments which, in such cases, it is the magnanimity of virtue to feel, and the glory of patriotism to proclaim? That were dastardly silence, abject timidity, criminal submission. The truth is, let rulers possess, in a reasonable measure, the character which they *should* bear, under the outward privileges they enjoy, and fulfil, to a tolerable extent, the ends for which they have been elevated to magisterial rule, with the peculiar facilities they possess; and they have nothing to fear, but much to hope, from the widest diffusion of correct intelligence and mental culture among their subjects. Such subjects will be

the truest friends in times of political agitation, the constitutional supporters of the throne against popular violence, and the intrepid defenders of the country against foreign invasion.

Besides, when any disturbances *have* arisen in a country, they are the *intelligent part* of the people on whom the chief dependance for the restoration of good order is placed. Need governments to be told, after the sad experience they have bought with the blood of millions slain in their ruinous wars, that nothing is more difficult to control than an uninstructed populace put into motion under a political convulsion, either by their own irregular passions, or by the acts of unprincipled demagogues? It were not much more difficult to chain the winds, and to arrest the tides. But, with a population whose minds have been improved by early education, and enlightened by sound instruction, that difficulty evanishes. *They* are open to new arguments—to offered explanations. *They* can appreciate whatever excuses are alleged for the grievances under which they have been groaning during past years, and from which they are determined to be free during their future course. *They* can weigh whatever proposals are made respecting reforms, for which they have presented many urgent petitions, and from which they think the happiest effects would result to their country. *They* can feel conviction when sufficient evidence has been placed before their minds—gratitude when true kindness has originated the favours they have received—enlightened submission when legitimate authority has issued the laws under which

they have been placed. Happy for *good* rulers, were all their subjects, even in the lowest rank, instructed to the utmost extent of their capacities; and were it possible to give them the same profound acquaintance with politics that our most distinguished civilians have acquired, they should be the more qualified to esteem the excellence of their political institutions, to admire the sagacity with which their affairs are managed, and award the praise to which their governors are entitled.

3. *No less groundless is that other objection, that political studies are unfriendly to devotional feeling.* It should be remembered here, that all scientific studies, prosecuted without due attention to religious duties, at proper intervals, have a tendency to weaken devotion. They take such an engrossing hold of the mind, and make such extensive encroachments on time, that devotion becomes, in many cases, a secondary matter. What inquirers of piety have not felt this when examining their successive states of mind, and even lamented that, after pursuing some ingenious speculation with an intensity of thought which had engrossed all the powers of the intellect, and arriving at important results which have wakened the admiration of congenial minds, their spirituality should be so much impaired? Must we then discard the investigation of those physical sciences which have been brought, in modern times, to such perfection,—which have contributed so much to the advancement of the useful arts,—and which afford such varied proofs, drawn from innumerable sources, of the infinite attributes of the Supreme Being? No surely.

No more ought we to spurn from us, under the pretext of superior sanctity, the study of political science —a science which shows the exquisite provision made in our original constitution for society, unfolds the great ends to be accomplished by the social order, and comprehends the grand principles of national morality unfolded, with such solemn sanctions, in the Bible. The true way of acting is, unquestionably, to keep that subject within proper limits, to examine it in the light of divine revelation, to realize to ourselves the continual presence of our omniscient Judge, and never to relax our application to those devotional exercises by which, under the promised influences of the Holy Spirit, the spirituality of our minds may be kept up, even in the cold regions of abstract discussion, and on the troubled arena of political strife.

"The principle of this objection," remarks Dr. M'Leod, "while it appears to proceed from spiritual-mindedness, is near of kin to the unenlightened devotion of the recluse or the hermit, who retires from the world into a life of solitude. It approaches monastic holiness more than the piety of Abraham, of Elijah, of Daniel, of Paul, and of John the Divine. These were men of piety. They taught, and they practised, the duties of political life, both in peace and in war, without thinking that it injured devotion; and even '*in the Spirit on the Lord's day*,' the beloved disciple is directed, by his arisen Lord, to write of the contendings and changes of empire. Believe me, if our religion is of the right description, and exists in a proper measure, we shall certainly be

enabled to contemplate the providence of God in all human affairs, and apply the law of God to questions of civil polity, without either endangering a pious frame of mind, or engendering the evil passions of worldly politicians.

"The devotional feelings of many professed Christians are so feeble, and have so little foundation in moral principle, that they are readily deranged or removed. Others, who have learned only the rudiments of religion, seldom consider it in any other light than as matter of mental comfort to an individual, without having any relation to their improvement and usefulness as members of society. As they would give their attention to the things of time, uninfluenced by Christian principles, they may wish to fix in the sanctuary their attention upon the concerns of eternity, without any reference to a general reformation of either church or state. It is ever to be expected, that those who are unwilling to *consider* religiously their political concerns, will be as unwilling to *behave* religiously in their political transactions. This is the way to produce a separation between the two subjects. And yet the separation cannot be complete, unless all Christians are secluded from every concern in national politics; and the entire management devolved on those who will not be tempted to think of the Bible as the rule, or of piety as the principle, according to which civilians should act; and where would this end, but in the transfer of the undivided management of national affairs into the hands of infidels?"*

* Scriptural View, &c. pp. 38, 39.

SECTION II.

THE STANDARD OF POLITICAL GOVERNMENT.

It is of immense consequence to our success in investigating the principles of every other science, that we have a *standard* understood, acknowledged, and invariable, with which to compare the ideas that occur, in the course of our inquiries. Such a standard serves to decide between conflicting opinions, to solve harassing doubts, to terminate important controversies, to place our discoveries on a foundation, the stability of which cannot be shaken by the breath of scepticism, and to impart to our minds that rational tranquillity which flows from conviction founded on certain evidence. Hence the certainty with which the truths of physical science have been demonstrated, and the satisfaction with which the mind expatiates on the brilliant discoveries that have been effected, *ever since experience was made the standard according to which all theories ought to be tried.* Let a standard, equally adapted to the decision of all the questions

that present themselves in political science, be fixed upon; and ere long, the wretched prejudices still cherished will be discarded, the rash judgments occasionally hazarded withdrawn, and the fixed principles of morality, which have so long been excluded from political councils, exalted to that ascendency which their intrinsic obligation requires, and their superior utility justifies.

What then *is* the true standard of civil polity? What is that ultimate criterion to which we should bring all our political notions, whether they are the results of abstract speculation, or the lessons of practical experience? Or, is there no such criterion in existence within the compass of our faculties—no primary principle from which the theory of political morality may be deduced,—no court of appeal to which contending parties may refer their respective doctrines with the confidence of obtaining an impartial sentence? Notwithstanding the alarming extent to which the fluctuating views of expediency have hitherto been allowed to prevail in such matters, I am fully persuaded, there is such a standard as that we desiderate; and of all the standards that can be named, no one, surely, deserves to be put in competition with the *political morality inculcated in the sacred writings. With what limitations this is the standard of civil government—what proofs exist to establish the truth of this important proposition,—and what false standards have occasionally been adopted in modern kingdoms, are the three topics that fall to be discussed in this section.*

Let us ascertain, first of all, the particular senses

in which the social morality furnished in the Bible is to be received as the true standard of political government.

1. This is the true standard of political government, *only in those countries into which revelation has been introduced.* All other countries, how privileged soever with human laws, are certainly exempted from the authority of a standard with which they have never been supplied by their favoured neighbours, and of which they have not obtained the requisite knowledge. The only standard by which *they* can be guided, is the unassisted mind, exerting the various faculties with which it has been endowed, and collecting accurate views from all the sources to which it has immediate access—that noble spirit which, notwithstanding the sad degradation it has undergone since the primitive condition of man, is still capable of discovering many sound principles engraven on the heart by the finger of God,* and of learning many salutary lessons taught in the school of experience. But as to the superior light of revelation, *that* possesses the authority of a *test*, only in those countries which have received the invaluable record in its original integrity, and are accountable to God for the use they make of the revealed laws under which they have been placed.

2. This is the true standard of political government, *only so far as it is applicable to civil society.* It is not pretended that it offers a complete enumeration—a perfect detail of all the institutions, laws,

* Romans ii. 14, 15.

forms, and provisions requisite to an entire code of civil policy. A hundred questions may be stated in political science, to which it furnishes no *specific* reply; and a hundred cases may occur, even in the management of the smallest state, for which it supplies no *specific* rules. Who ever dreamt of finding the minutest regulations that experience has suggested respecting trade, agriculture, commerce, taxation, production, legislation, in a volume designed by its gracious Author to teach us general principles rather than particular details—moral precepts rather than scientific truths? Who ever pretended that this volume renders unnecessary the valuable treatises that have been produced on these important subjects, by men who brought to their investigation minds trained to the strictest habits of accurate thinking, correct calculation, and intellectual discrimination? No one. All that we contend for is, that revelation supplies the fundamental maxims of morality, the dictates of eternal rectitude, the mandates of divine authority; and that only so far as they are applicable to the government of states, either in their domestic affairs, or in their international transactions, thus far only are they a standard of supreme authority, and universal obligation.

3. This is the true standard of political government *to the whole extent of its applicability to political affairs.* It is painful to observe the irreligious propensity of a great multitude, who insist, with earnestness, on the total exclusion of the Bible from the office of determining political questions, even though the chief interests of society, intellectual, mo-

ral, and religious are involved. Nothing fills them with greater horror than our applying this test to the public character of rulers, to their official conduct, to the practical measures they adopt, or to the speculative views they avow. So long as we apply it only to religious opinions, and ecclesiastical forms, we have their approbation, from the conviction that we are putting it to a legitimate use—a holy purpose. "But the instant we begin to make the like judicial application of its laws to the public conduct of the governing authorities," as is well remarked by Foster, "that instant we debase Christianity to politics, most likely to party-politics; and a pious horror is testified at the profanation. Christianity is to be honoured somewhat after the same manner as the Lama of Thibet. It is to stay in its temple, to have the proprieties of homage duly preserved within its precincts, but to be *exempted* (in reverence of its sanctity!) from all cognizance of great public affairs, even in the points where they most involve its interests. But Christianity must have leave to decline the compliment. As to its sacred character, it can *venture that,* on the strength of its intrinsic quality, and of its own guardianship, while in a censorial capacity, it steps on what will be called political ground. It is not so demure a thing that it cannot, without violating its consecrated character, go into the exercise of this judicial office. And as to its *right* to do so, either it has a right to take cognizance now of the manner in which the spirit and measures of states and their regulations bear upon the most momentous interests, or it will have no right to be

brought forward as the supreme law for the final award upon those proceedings and those men."*

4. This standard of political government, *civil rulers are bound, by indispensable obligations, to receive, obey, and honour.* According to the superficial views of some, and the profound scepticism of others, they are at perfect liberty either to accept or to reject this standard, in the exercise of their sovereign discretion, and irresponsible judgment. If they choose to conform to it in their legislative proceedings and practical administrations, they do well for the interests of the country over which they preside. But, should they disregard it in their official duties,—should they rule as if the supreme Lawgiver had delivered no statutes in revelation for regulating their proceedings, and erected no tribunal for trying their state according to their actions, still, it is allowed, they are guilty of no sin, incur no judicial displeasure, and merit no future punishment. Now, this is a sentiment in which I cannot acquiesce. It occurs to my mind, as a dictate of moral rectitude, and a requirement of divine inspiration, that, when God *speaks*, man should *listen*, even with profound reverence and practical submission, whatever the rank he occupies, or the office he fills. Let him wear the richest diadem that ever adorned a mortal brow, control the mightiest empire ever subjected to human sway, and receive the deepest obeisance ever offered by abject millions to an imaginary deity, still is he bound to receive, with gratitude, whatever mes-

* Preface to his Essay, &c. pp. 12, 13.

sages He sends from heaven, and observe, with fidelity, whatever commands he sanctions with his authority. He causes the most insensible creatures to hear *his* voice, whether raised in the howlings of the storm, the murmuring of the brook, or the roaring of the thunder. At his voice the rocks are thrown down, the mountains shake to their foundations, the waters forsake the channels in which they have flowed for ages, the celestial bodies revolve in their respective orbits with immense velocity, and the angelic spirits in heaven, before whom the proudest potentates on earth shrink into insignificance, as to power, intelligence, and purity, fly with alacrity to fulfil his pleasure,—"to obey his commands." And shall we be told that *human princes*, even in the most exalted situations to which ambition raises them, and amid the greatest splendours with which affluence surrounds them, are at liberty to disregard his voice when uttered either by his moral deputy in the human bosom, or by his revealed law in the sacred volume?

5. *An equal obligation rests on civil communities in their public character, to take the morality of the Bible as their standard.* Many, I am aware, plead, that this is quite *optional.* They admit, that a nation may choose a worse guide in its social concerns than the Bible,—that it may derive many salutary laws from this precious record,—and that the practice of its pure morals, inculcated in the name of the supreme Ruler, might yield the happiest effects. Still, it is alleged, should it choose, from any motives whatever, to overlook the Bible in regulating its public

affairs,—should it prefer some other guide in framing its political charter, and nominating its principal officers, it does nothing wrong. Is *this* a sentiment worthy of Christians? Can *this* find an echo in any truly pious bosom,—an argument in any soundly instructed mind? Surely, if God has spoken in the Scriptures to nations respecting the privileges they possess, the duties they should perform, the iniquities they should avoid, and the solemn responsibility they are under to Himself, for all the transactions in which they engage, then are they bound, by *indispensable obligation*, to hear with attention what he has uttered,—an obligation which they cannot set aside, under any pretext whatever, without committing sin which he will visit with his righteous displeasure, and incurring punishment which he will inflict with inflexible fidelity,—an obligation which they cannot observe, without performing virtuous obedience, on which he will look down with approbation, and yielding affectionate allegiance which he will reward with temporal prosperity. From the moment they have the statute-book of heaven translated into their languages, and put into their hands, from that moment they are *bound*, by the highest sanctions, to carry all its provisions into effect, in reforming the political systems under which they are placed, and regulating the political administrations by which their affairs are conducted.

Having thus stated the particular limitations with which we should receive the proposition announced, —*that the morality of the Scriptures forms the true standard of political government*,—I would next pro-

duce some of the leading proofs by which the truth of this proposition may be supported.

Judging from what our benevolent Maker has done in other cases somewhat similar, might we not expect, even before examination, that in a revelation of his will, he would not overlook the concerns of political society? When it is remembered, that revelation prescribes rules respecting the origin, the objects, and the formation of families; inculcates the relative duties of husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants; and contains a great variety of regulations applicable to these important classes, is it reasonable to suppose that he would leave the *larger divisions of society,—nations,* without the slightest intimation of his will relative to the political institutions they should adopt, the political duties they should discharge, and the political privileges of which they should secure the possession? I cannot conceive a supposition more unreasonable. "A religion that comes from Heaven," observes a learned writer, "and that is formed for universality, should develope the great principles of social union, should explain and enforce all the relative duties, should soften and civilize the human character, should perfect and ennoble every natural sentiment which tends to make man co-operate with his fellow-creatures for good. So does the religion of the Bible. Its precepts and doctrines are adapted to our advantage in *all* circumstances of life and conduct. Like the stars 'in the glorious firmament of the sky,' the precepts and promises applicable to human life are universally scattered over the face of the Scriptures; though, like

the stars, they are more thickly grouped, and shine with more beauty and refulgence in some places than in others."*

The distinguished excellence of the moral law, as well as of theological truth, is the subject of unbounded eulogy in the Scriptures themselves. "I *have seen an end of all perfection,*" says David, "*but thy command is exceeding broad. O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day. Thou, through thy commandments, hast made me wiser than mine enemies: for they are ever with me. I have more understanding than all my teachers; for thy testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the ancients; because I keep thy precepts.*"† "*All scripture,*" says Paul, "*is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*"‡ Many similar eulogies occur,—the immediate productions of that Spirit who gave to revelation its transcendent excellence. Now, would revelation deserve all these, expressed in such unmeasured terms, if it contained *nothing* applicable to the conduct of civil society,—*nothing* adequate to the correction of those pernicious errors which have crept into governments,—nothing calculated to introduce those extensive improvements of which the social order is susceptible? Unquestionably not. Inexpressibly valuable, no doubt, is the ample flood of

* Letters by Olinthus Gregory, LL.D. Vol. I. pp. 254, 255, 256.

† Psalms cxix. 96—110.

‡ 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17.

light which it pours over the character of God, the scheme of redemption, the immortality of the soul, the resurrection of the body, the precious privileges of the church, the pre-eminent pleasures of heaven, and a number of other vital subjects connected with the highest welfare of *man as an individual.* But, surely, if it passes over, in total silence, his *social* character, if it describes not the political advantages he should enjoy, and the political duties he should fulfil as a citizen,—if it lays down no express instructions by which he may distinguish the tinsel of false glory from the lustre of moral grandeur, and the baseness of political corruption from the disinterestedness of public virtue, then is it chargeable with a capital defect which greatly diminishes its real value, and which we can hardly reconcile with the infinite goodness and unerring wisdom of the supreme Being.

Again, look to every department, even of the material universe that has been brought within the range of our observation. There God has established laws which are never interrupted in their operation, and never opposed by their objects, except by his own interference for extraordinary purposes. "Thus, when the supreme Being formed the universe," says Blackstone, "and created matter out of nothing, he impressed certain principles upon that matter, from which it can never depart, and without which it would cease to be. If we farther advance from mere inactive matter to vegetable and animal life, we shall find them still governed by laws; more numerous indeed, but equally fixed and invariable. The whole

progress of plants, from seed to the root, and from thence to the seed again,—the method of animal nutrition, digestion, secretion, and all other branches of vital economy, are not left to chance, or the will of the creature itself, but are performed in a wondrous involuntary manner, and guided *by unerring rules laid down by the great Creator.*" * Can we, then, suppose that that great branch of the moral universe which has been placed on this globe,—the human species,—has been left without fixed laws coextensive with the mutual relations that obtain among its members, and with the reciprocal duties that are essential to its good order? Dare we allege that physical laws have been established for the government of material bodies scattered over the illimitable regions of space, and yet, that no moral laws have been revealed in the Scriptures for the government of rational creatures, arranged into separate communities for their mutual good? Such, surely, were an impious allegation equally against that infinite benevolence which seeks the greatest happiness of mankind, and against that unerring wisdom which always chooses the most suitable means for the accomplishment of that great end. But, leaving mere presumptions, I come to direct proofs.

1. *Revelation contains the fundamental principles of political morality stated with great clearness, and illustrated by numerous examples.* These principles respect the origin, the ends, and the divisions of civil society,—the various orders of civil rulers,—the prin-

* Commentaries, Vol. I. pp. 38, 39.

cipal qualifications they should possess,—the important duties they should perform,—the corresponding rewards they should receive,—and a great variety of other matters connected with the great interests of the nations over which they are entrusted with political power. Are nations, then, I would ask, warranted to overlook these principles which have been conveyed from heaven, at sundry times, and in diverse portions, for their government? Can they manage their social concerns, just as if these had no place in the sacred record, without being chargeable with the smallest guilt, and obnoxious to the least displeasure? When Deity, "*the King of nations,*" has supplied the loss of the original law inscribed on the heart by divine agency, with a fairer copy extended on paper under divine superintendence, are they innocent, if they disobey its explicit requirements, and contemn its solemn sanctions? What would be thought of the inhabitants of this country, should they reject, with insolent contempt, the righteous laws which have been sanctioned with the royal assent in a regular manner, and promulgated to the requisite extent by seasonable publication? Would they not, with strict justice, be accounted *rebels,* by whom one of the foulest crimes had been committed, and to whom one of the severest punishments is due? How, then, can you defend from a similar charge, even in a higher degree, those numerous subjects of the Almighty Ruler, who, in their political affairs, disregard, with rancorous aversion, those pure statutes which have been enacted by his authority, proclaimed by inspired messengers from his throne, and ad-

dressed, under solemn sanctions, to all his rational creatures? The truth is, no nation, however advanced in intellectual cultivation and sound intelligence,—no senate, however distinguished for legal acquirements and political wisdom,—no cabinet, however eminent for profound sagacity and diplomatic skill,—no monarch, however admired for the sound judgment which he has received from his gracious Creator, or for the multifarious attainments which he has accumulated by laborious study, *can*, without rebellion against the Governor of the Universe, disobey the revealed law in any one of the theoretical questions, or practical measures, to which it is applicable either by its express provisions or its evident implications. "*If ye will fear the Lord, and serve him, and obey his voice, and not rebel against the commandment of the Lord, then shall both ye, and also the king that reigneth over you, continue following the Lord your God. But if ye will not obey the voice of the Lord, but rebel against the commandment of the Lord, then shall the hand of the Lord be against you, as it was against your fathers.*"*

2. *Nations are commanded, by divine authority, to yield unreserved subjection, in political affairs, to the revealed law of God.* Surveying the story of the first nation on whom the lights of revelation shone, *the Hebrews*, we do not find that they were abandoned, in political things, to the directions of the unassisted mind, to the lessons of actual experience, or to the examples of surrounding countries. On the contrary, they were furnished with numerous regulations which they were

* 1 Sam. xii. 14, 15.

required to observe, with pious respect, and habitual gratitude, both in the management of their internal concerns, and the transaction of public business with foreign kingdoms. How solemn the urgency with which the following exhortations, selected from an innumerable multitude, are addressed to them, by their chief magistrate, acting under the guidance of heaven. "*Now hearken, O Israel, unto the statutes, and unto the judgments, which I teach you, for to do them, that ye may live, and go in and possess the land, which the Lord God of your fathers giveth you. Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall you diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you. Behold, I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the Lord my God commanded me, that ye should do so in the land whither ye go to possess it. Keep, therefore, and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations which shall hear all these statutes and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people: for what nation is there so great who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon him for? And what nation is there so great that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?*"* Now, here the great principle of national subjection to the revealed law is taught in the most explicit manner, and sanctioned by the very highest authority. Have we

* Deut. iv. 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8.

any intimation in the scriptures, that this principle was *peculiar* to that ancient people settled for particular ends, in the promised land? That they had peculiarities in their civil polity no less than in their ecclesiastical hierarchy; that these peculiarities were abolished with the typical ritual on which they had been engrafted, and must be excluded from the political systems adopted in Christian countries, are facts which I most readily admit. But, who will hazard the assertion, that this grand moral principle, founded on the immaculate rectitude of the Deity, on the universal extent of his government, and the immutable relations in which human society, under every possible modification, stands to him, was one of them? Assume for a moment that nations, since the abrogation of the Jewish economy, are released from the dominion of this salutary principle, that is, are freed from the explicit requirements of the divine law that stands unrepealed, and *this*, I affirm, is a *peculiarity* of the most extraordinary kind. There is not another object in existence thus thrown loose from the control of its Creator; thus abandoned to the direction of mere chance, or mutable inclination. All the tribes of irrational animals, from the minutest insect to the mightiest quadruped; all the classes of vegetables, from the smallest flower that the foot treads upon to the magnificent oak that rules with undisputed sway over the forest; all the bodies of inanimate matter, from the great luminary blazing in the heavens to the smallest pebble thrown upon the sea shore, *all* are subjected to suitable laws established by the will of the Supreme Ruler, and operating, with unvarying

uniformity, under his unceasing superintendence.* And if the nations, to whom revelation has been sent, are not bound by the moral precepts which are the judicial requirements of his will, the dictates of his unchanging rectitude, the mirror from which are reflected, with transforming efficacy, the glories of his moral character, then are they in a situation the unprecedented peculiarity of which should awaken one feeling of unbounded, universal, and unending amazement.

3. *Nations are encouraged to give unreserved obedience, in political things, to the revealed law, by the promise of temporal rewards.* Such blessings as virtuous communities most earnestly desire, and patriotic rulers most diligently promote,—as liberty, good morals, intestine tranquillity, abundant crops, security from foreign aggression, prosperity in useful employments, success in honourable wars, the increase of national wealth, the acquisition of great respectability, and the enjoyment of extensive happi-

* "In every part and place of the universe with which we are acquainted, we perceive the exertion of a power which, we believe, mediately or immediately, to proceed from the Deity. For instance, in what part or point of space, that has ever been explored, do we not discover attraction? In what regions do we not find light? In what accessible portion of our globe do we not meet with gravity, magnetism, electricity, together with the properties also and powers of organized substances, of vegetable or of animated nature? The laws of nature everywhere prevail: they are uniform and universal. A law cannot execute itself. A law refers us to an agent. Now, an agency so general, as that we cannot discover its absence, or assign the place in which some effect of its continued energy is not found, may, in popular language, at least, and perhaps, without much deviation from philosophical strictness, be called universal."—*Paley's Natural Theology*, pp. 367, 368.

ness—are offered, with great liberality, as the suitable rewards of national subjection to those divine statutes under the authority of which they have been placed. To this effect is that remarkable address,—delivered first to the Jewish nation immediately before their organization in Canaan, and applicable to all other nations so far as it refers to political rules of permanent moral obligation,—of which we have the following copy from the pen of Moses. "*And all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God. Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field. Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy cattle, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep. Blessed shall be thy basket and thy store. Blessed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and blessed shalt thou be when thou goest out. The Lord shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face: they shall come out against thee one way, and flee before thee seven ways. The Lord shall command the blessing upon thee in thy store houses, and in all that thou settest thine hand unto: and he shall bless thee in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee. The Lord shall establish thee an holy people unto himself, as he hath sworn unto thee, if thou wilt keep the commandments of the Lord thy God and walk in his ways. And all people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the Lord, and they shall be afraid of thee. And the Lord shall make thee plenteous in goods, in the fruit of thy body, and*

*in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy ground, in the land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers to give thee. The Lord shall open unto thee his good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his season, and to bless all the work of thine hand: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow. And the Lord shall make thee the head and not the tail, and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath; if that thou hearken unto the commandments of the Lord thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and to do them."** It were easy to transcribe many other passages, all involving the same general principle that runs through this, and all calculated to impress on political bodies the great duty of making the divine law the standard of all their social proceedings.

4. *Nations are dissuaded from the violation of the revealed law in political matters by the denunciation of tremendous calamities.* Allow that nations favoured with revelation are *not bound* to yield any obedience to the written law, it follows that their transgression of it should not expose them to punishment from the hand of God—that a Being of inflexible equity should not manifest his displeasure against them, for neglecting a rule which they are under no obligations to observe, and that the most flagrant course of disobedience they can pursue should not subject them to any of those temporal

* Deut. xxviii. 2—13. Read also Levit. xxvi. 3—12. Deut. iv. 40. v. 32, 33. vi. 1, 2, 3, 17, 18, 24, 25.

judgments that retributive justice brings upon communities. But is this the style in which the Supreme Lawgiver speaks to nations? Does he promise them impunity, whatever violations of the spirit, the scope, and provisions of his law they commit? Should they trample its explicit requisitions beneath their feet, and cast its mortifying prohibitions behind their backs, does he animate them with the prospect of uninterrupted happiness in his friendship, and of continued prosperity under his blessing? No. All the calamities that can express his irrepressible displeasure against national guilt, dissuade from the offences to which their passions would lead, and constrain them to those high duties in the practice of which they will find their true interests involved, are threatened, in the most terrific language, against national disobedience. "*It shall come to us,*" he declares, "*if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee and overtake thee. Cursed shalt thou be in the city, and cursed shalt thou be in the field. Cursed shall be thy basket and thy store. Cursed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy land, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep.... The Lord shall send upon thee cursing, vexation, and rebuke, in all that thou settest thine hand unto for to do; until thou be destroyed, and until thou perish quickly; because of the wickedness of thy doings, whereby thou hast forsaken me.....Moreover, all these curses shall come upon thee, and shall pursue thee,*

*and overtake thee till thou be destroyed; because thou hearkenest not unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which he commanded thee."**

5. *History proves that nations have, in point of fact, been punished with signal calamities for political transgressions, and rewarded with important blessings for political obedience.* I again refer to the example of the Jewish nation, on whom the Divine law was first imposed. Did the frequent transgressions, into which they fell, either from their irregular passions or their inveterate prejudices, pass without the slightest punishment? Did God look with cold neutrality, with perfect indifference, on their contempt of moral obligations, their violation of political orders, which himself had emitted, and their commission of political evils, which himself had prohibited? No: their *national* sin—an odious spectacle—provoked his severest displeasure. It was *this* which drew down upon them the public calamities under which they suffered, on numerous occasions. It was *this* which brought famine into their borders, by destroying the precious fruits of the soil, enriched by nature with peculiar fertility. It was *this* which exposed them to the ravages of pestilence, strewing many places with the bodies of the dead, and filling many villages with the lamentations of the living. It was *this* which occasioned the horrors of war devouring its wretched victims on the ensanguined field, and carrying wretched survivors into

* Read the whole passage, Deut. xxviii. 15—68. Levit. xxvi. 14—46.

foreign servitude. It was *this*, in one word, which produced the final dissolution of their celebrated community, the irreparable destruction of their political privileges, and the total dispersion over various lands of the numerous inhabitants, flying before the victorious arms of imperial Rome. Aggravated is the national crime of forsaking the revealed law, and tremendous is the punishment that, sooner or later, follows.* On the other hand, conscientious subjection to this law uniformly secured to that people the temporal rewards promised. When, from pious regard to its sacred authority, and careful observance of its salutary provisions, they maintained public virtue, then prosperity rewarded them in their political affairs. Happy at home, and respected abroad; tranquil under the shade of their own divine institutions, and honoured in the estimation of adjacent states; successful in the prosecution of domestic employments, and victorious in resisting the incursions of hostile tribes, they rose to be the admiration of distant countries, as they had long been the "*treasure*" of the Almighty. Who does not see in their happy destiny the advantages to every nation of rallying around the standard of the Bible—of conforming to all the social rules which it reveals, and improving, with pious conscientiousness, the superior lights which it reflects? Who does not feel that the political precepts which it develops, are the true

* "The Jews had, by their sins, profaned themselves, and given to the Gentiles a right over them, which none could have had, if they had continued in their obedience to the law of God."—Sidney's Discourses concerning Government, p. 283.

elements of sound legislation and good government —the vital principles which shall give to states a lasting prosperity, and to statesmen an immortal renown?

Such are a few considerations offered to show that the morality of the scriptures forms the true standard to which nations in their political movements should conform. This doctrine—a doctrine of such inexpressible importance as to merit the fullest elucidation—may be supported by another line of argument to which I have not yet alluded—that which proves that *political rulers*, as an essential order in every civil community, are required by divine authority to follow this perfect rule, in their official duties. Under this division, the following proofs are offered.

1. Political rulers are commanded, by *divine authority, to submit to the Redeemer, in their official character.* Kings, in the high functions with which they are invested, judges in the useful offices to which they are raised, even the humblest officers who execute the meanest services required in the actual administration of public affairs, are enjoined, in the clearest terms, to honour *him* with official submission at once affectionate, grateful, unreserved, and uninterrupted. "*I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth. Yea, all kings shall fall down before him. Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings; be instructed ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way when his wrath is kindled but a little.*" *

* Psalms lxxxix. 27.—lxxii. 11.—ii. 10, 11. 12.

But, how can they yield the required submission, except according to the written law, unfolded in the sacred writings? There exists no other measure by which they can ascertain either the pure principles from which they should act, the important duties they should perform, or the great objects they should accomplish, in rendering that perfect submission. As they would then submit to that glorious potentate to whom universal empire has been delegated, and on whom the high title—"*Prince of the kings of the earth,*" * has been conferred,—as they would avert the awful displeasure which disobedience should inevitably provoke, and enjoy the gracious friendship which obedience should unquestionably procure,—as they would rise to the highest estimation by the practical acknowledgment, before the world, of him on whom the bright sceptre of the universe has been bestowed, and to whom the splendid hierarchy of heaven offer unceasing homage; so ought they to cultivate a minute acquaintance with the revealed law, as the only accurate, authentic, and invariable standard of their conduct. It is well that they acquire a profound knowledge of the great principles of the constitution, of the good laws in the statute-book, and of the successive enactments which are added by the legislature in every new session. But, never shall they yield that profound homage to the Mediator which they owe in their official capacities,—never shall they acquire that distinguished excellence which they should exemplify before their numerous

* Revelations i. 5.

constituents,—never shall they produce those signal benefits, of which, under providence, they are the appointed instruments, till they search, with pious inquisitiveness, the scriptures for the moral maxims with which they are replete, and render, with strict conscientiousness, the universal obedience to which they are entitled. "*Wherefore, hear the word of the Lord, ye scornful men, that rule this people, which is in Jerusalem.*" "*All the kings of the earth shall praise thee, O Lord, when they hear the words of thy mouth.*" "*As many were astonished at him; so shall he sprinkle many nations, the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for that which had not been told them, shall they see; and that which they had not heard, shall they consider.*" *

2. Accordingly, *political rulers are required, in express terms, to obey the divine law, in their official proceedings.* For incontrovertible evidence of this, we have only to cast an eye over the solemn charges that were delivered to the Jewish rulers, at successive periods. Look to *Moses*, summoned by the voice of God to the deliverance of his enslaved people, and entrusted with the supreme direction of their affairs during many years. Was he permitted, in any case, to prefer the suggestions of his own erring judgment, or the maxims of worldly policy? No; whatever official duties were required from him as a magistrate, a lawgiver, and a warrior,—whether employed in the daily administration of justice, or the difficult enterprise of war,—whether engaged in the

* Isaiah xxviii. 14. Psalm cxxxviii. 4. Isaiah lii. 14, 15.

management of political interests, or the direction of religious ceremonies, he was bound, by inviolable ties, to take no other guide than the sacred laws which had been announced from the mouth of the Almighty ruler. "*Be thou for the people to Godward, that thou mayest bring the causes unto God; and thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt show them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do.*"* Look to Joshua, that illustrious officer who succeeded to the high functions quitted by Moses, and carried the surviving Hebrews in triumph into the fertile territories which were promised them. Was he allowed, I ask, either in the military services which he performed with such distinguished valour, or in the judicial duties which he discharged with such incorruptible integrity, either to shut his eyes to the written laws which had been enacted by the authority of God, or to close his ears to the successive intimations which had been promised of *his will?* No, assuredly. "*Be thou strong and very courageous,*" is the memorable address of Deity—"*that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law which Moses my servant commanded thee; turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest. This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shall meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein; for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good*

* Exod. xviii. 19, 20.

success."*—Look again to that peculiar order of rulers who succeeded this gallant warrior on his demise—*the Judges*—an order who acted in the double capacity of chief magistrates and military officers, and under whose wise administration, extended through four centuries, the national affairs prospered, in an unusual degree, under the divine countenance. Now, I ask, were they left, in the official duties which they conducted with great skill and indomitable courage, either to the uncertain light of nature, or to the fluctuating voice of a majority? No, faithful to *Him* whose temporary vicegerents they were, they had recourse, on all occasions, to *his law*, which was their unerring guide in the counsels they tendered and the measures they executed, in the defensive wars they waged, and the honourable alliances they contracted, in the domestic policy they pursued, and the foreign intercourse they maintained. "*And when the Lord raised them up judges, then the Lord was with the judge, and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies, all the days of the judge.*" "*The Spirit of the Lord came upon him, and he judged Israel, and went out to war.*"† Look, in fine, to the highest class of rulers with which that great people were favoured, after the judges ceased,—*the kings*. Were they authorized, I would still ask, in any of their official proceedings whatever, to follow the impulse of their own inclinations, or the dictates of their own understandings, or the opinions of an irreligious populace, or the examples of surrounding

* Joshua i. 7, 8. † Judges ii. 18; iii. 10.

nations, or any other guide inferior to divine revelation? No, privileged with this inspired record, they were required, by an express mandate from heaven, announced five hundred years before their order existed, to transcribe with their own hand, study with unwearied perseverance, and execute with unswerving fidelity, the precious laws which it contains. "*And it shall be, when he sitteth on the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book, and of that which is before the priests, the Levites. And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the words of this law, and these statutes, to do them: that his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from the commandment, to the right hand or to the left, to the end that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he and his children in the midst of Israel.*"* From all these facts put together, the conclusion we are warranted to draw is, that civil rulers are bound to consult the scriptures for those appropriate rules, not abrogated with the typical system, that teach the great ends to which they should aspire, the public means they should adopt, and the elevated feelings by which they should be influenced.

3. *Political rulers are severely punished for their disobedience to the divine law.* Had this order of citizens been exempted from the obligation of that law, in their official conduct, then their violation of it, however flagrant, could not have constituted *sin*,

* Deut. xvii. 18, 19, 20. See also 1 Kings ii. 1—4.

kindled the divine displeasure, or provoked positive calamities. But how does the fact agree with this supposition? When rulers presumed to transgress the sacred statutes which had been addressed to them, did they *prosper* in their public measures under the smiles of the Supreme Potentate? Did they command continued tranquillity in their country, growing happiness in their court, and increasing honour in foreign lands? Ah! no. Forfeiting the divine favour by their disobedience, they incurred the divine wrath, which broke forth upon them, in all periods of the Jewish monarchy, in dreadful judgments, inflicted sometimes on the royal delinquents themselves, sometimes on the guilty community by whose passive obedience they were encouraged in their criminal rebellion against God. For examples, we have only to open the sacred narrative. See *Jeroboam*, because he kept not the "*commandments*"* of the Lord, punished with an untimely end, his family extirpated in one day, and his country given up to fresh troubles under new scourges. See *Ahab*, because he "*had forsaken the commandments of the Lord*,"† suffering the terrible reproof of an inspired prophet, bringing severe troubles on Israel, and visited himself with signal retribution when the dogs "*licked*" his blood, and justice annihilated his house. See the three last Kings of Judah, because they had done "*evil in the sight of the Lord*,"‡ bringing irremediable destruc-

* 1 Kings xiv. 7.—xvi. with xv. 29.
† 1 Kings xviii. 17, 18.—with xxi. 17-22.
‡ 2 Kings xxiii. 37.—xxiv. 9, 19.

tion on their governments, exposing the greatest interests of the country to the rapacity of barbarous hordes, and subjecting the highest ranks of the community to hopeless servitude in a foreign land. But why dwell on particular examples? The whole history of political government among that privileged people shows, that *rejection* of the divine law was the sole cause of all the physical privations they endured, all the positive sufferings they sustained from internal enemies, and all the fearful ravages with which they were chastised by foreign conquerors. "*Since the days of our fathers, have we been in a great trespass unto this day, and for our iniquities have we, our kings, and our priests, been delivered into the hand of the kings of the lands, to the sword, to captivity, and to a spoil, and to confusion of face, as it is this day. And now, O our God, what shall we say after this? for we have forsaken thy commandments which thou hast commanded by thy servants the prophets.*"*

4. *Political rulers have been highly rewarded for their obedience to the divine law.* Was not this promised, in explicit terms, to the men who accepted office over the ancient Hebrews, by divine appointment, through human choice, at different periods? Did not God himself enjoin Joshua to observe that law in all his proceedings, by this argument: "*Then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success?*"† Did not David, with his

* Ezra ix. 7-10; with Nehem. ix. 32-34; Psalm ii. 2-5; Dan. ix. 5-15.

† Joshua i. 8.

latest breath, urge Solomon "*to keep the charge of the Lord his God, to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and his testimonies, as it is written in the law of Moses,*" adding, "*that thou mayest prosper in all that thou dost, and whithersoever thou turnest thyself?*"* Did not a prophet assure Asa on his ascending the throne, "*The Lord is with you, while ye be with him; and if ye seek him, he will be found of you?*"† Accordingly, pious subjection to his revealed will, on the part of civil rulers, was followed by signal tokens of the divine approbation. God became their counsellor in difficulties that must have baffled their judgments, their protector amid dangers under which their courage must have failed—their comforter in trials under which their hearts must have sunk in despondency. If they were annoyed with opposition from the factious, they were cheered with the affection, the esteem, and the support of the virtuous; and if sorrow saddened their hearts when they anticipated the time that they must relinquish the crown, joy arose when they recalled the promise that "*their children, keeping the covenant, should sit upon the throne for evermore.*"‡ Under their reigns, in short, the kingdom was established against internal dissension and foreign aggression; the institutions of religion rose upon the ruins of idolatry, superstition, and vice; the improvement of the people succeeded to the gross corruption in which they had been immersed; the public treasury was replenished with liberal

* 1 Kings ii. 3.
† 2 Chron. xv. 2.
‡ Psalm cxxxii 12.

contributions paid by the subjects with alacrity; the national resources were augmented by large presents sent by the surrounding countries of their own accord; the public works were extended both for the encouragement of domestic employments, and the repulsion of foreign attacks; all the subordinate offices of government were filled with good men, public benefactors in every district of the country; and the national honour, raised to an unusual height, filled with a salutary fear the neighbouring tribes whom it did not inspire with cordial esteem.* How invaluable was the piety of such rulers,—rulers whose administrations yielded the happiest effects over the whole extent of their kingdom, whose names, as a sweet memorial, have been wafted down the stream of time with distinction, and whose examples, recorded with approbation, have served to animate the good in all succeeding generations. "*When the righteous are in authority the people rejoice.*"†

5. *Political rulers are required to be men of decided piety.* Is not this peculiar qualification prescribed in express terms, by that ultimate authority to which we are appealing? Does not this authority require that they shall be "*able men, fearing God, loving the truth, and hating covetousness?*" that "*he that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God, as the light of the morning when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds?*"‡ "By what solemn obligations, then, are they bound to take the

* 2 Chron. xvii. 3-19.

† Prov. xxix. 2.

‡ Exod. xviii. 21.—2 Sam. xxiii. 3, 4.

most effectual care, that those whom they elect, be men of acknowledged wisdom and virtue? To choose men of the contrary character, is to rebel against the known will of God, to sport with their own happiness, and to hazard that of their posterity. The only part of this subject about which a question will be raised and the part about which no question can consistently, either with the Scriptures or common sense, be ever raised, is the declaration, that *a ruler ought to be a righteous man.* To the question concerning this subject, the scriptural answer is short: 'As a roaring lion and a raging bear, so is a wicked ruler over the poor people.' This, it is to be remembered, is the decision, not of Solomon only, but of God. Common sense, directed by its own unerring rule of experience, has regularly given the same decision; and mustered, before the eyes of mankind, a long host of tyrants and public plunderers, of profligate legislators and abandoned magistrates, whose names have been followed by the hisses, and loaded with the execrations of mankind. Virtuous rulers, on the contrary, have always, unless in times of peculiar violence and prejudice, been seen and acknowledged to be public blessings."* Now, if they are actually imbued with genuine piety—with spiritual religion, incorporated with their moral constitution, they *cannot* resist its presiding influence over their minds, in the political offices which they occupy. It will control their faculties and dispositions, volitions, and actions, whatever public character they may bear, and under

* Theology by Timothy Dwight, LL.D. Vol. IV. 145, 146.

whatever outward circumstances they are placed. It will accompany them,—a living, an operative, an indestructible principle in their souls—into the senate, the cabinet, the palace, and even the camp, should the distressing necessity arise, in the course of their conciliatory councils, of an appeal to arms. It will carry them, by its native urgency, to the inspired record, that they may learn the minutest requirements of their divine Master, general principles applicable to all the exigencies of the community, and appropriate encouragements animating to their hearts under the peculiar difficulties with which they have to struggle. It will bind them, by indissoluble ties, to the throne of the eternal Lawgiver, in humble prostration before whom they will yield the readiest obedience, enjoy the purest pleasure, and impart the greatest good. How, indeed, any man not destitute of common sense can imagine them religious in private duties, and irreligious in public business,—obedient to the revealed law in devotion, and rebellious against it in politics,—saints in the church, and infidels in the state, fills me with unutterable amazement at the egregious folly of which the human mind, blinded by early prejudice, or misled by party-spirit, can be guilty. Only when the sun can exist without emitting light and heat to surrounding objects,—only when fire can burn without diffusing warmth through the whole apartment in which it blazes,—only when a fountain can contain its living waters, without pouring forth streams over the valley below,—only then shall piety flourish in their bosoms without producing its salutary fruits in their political lives, diffusing its

peculiar lustre over their political actions, and constraining them in all their official proceedings, to obey that perfect law, under the dominion of which they shall indulge the purest affections of their nature, and obtain the promised approbation of their Lord.

Such are the principal arguments which the Scriptures afford for the important truth, that *the Bible is the true standard of civil polity.* They "prove beyond all reasonable debate," I borrow the eloquent peroration of Dr. Dwight, "that the whole vindicable conduct of rulers towards their subjects, and of subjects towards their rulers, is nothing but a mere collection of duties, objects of moral obligation, required by God, and indispensably owed to him by men. The Christian religion, therefore, the rule of all duty, and involving all moral obligation, is so far from having nothing to do with this subject, that it is inseparably interwoven with every part of it. Accordingly, the Bible regulates, and were it not sinfully prevented from its proper influence, would exactly and entirely control, all the political doctrines and actions of men. It is, indeed, as easy and as common to deny truth, and refuse to perform our duty, to disobey God, and injure men, in political concerns, as in any other. In truth, there has been no field of iniquity more extensive than this; none in which more enormous crimes, or more terrible sufferings have existed. All these crimes and sufferings have sprung from the ignorance of, or disobedience to, the Scriptures. Were they allowed to govern the political conduct of mankind, both the crimes and

the sufferings would vanish; every duty, both of rulers and subjects, would be performed, and every interest would be completely secured. In what manner the doctrine against which I am contending ever came to be received by any man, who was not peculiarly weak or wicked, I am at a loss to determine. It would seem that, even the careless and gross examination of the most heedless reflector must have evinced both its folly and falsehood. A dream is not more unfounded; the decisions of frenzy are not more wild. To villains in power, or in pursuit of power, office, and public plunder, it is undoubtedly a most convenient doctrine; as it will quiet the reproaches of conscience, where conscience has not ceased to reproach; and throw the gate which opens to every crime and selfish gratification from its hinges. To subjects, to a state, to a nation, it is literally fatal. The people which have adopted it, may be certainly pronounced to have bidden a final adieu to its peace and its happiness, its virtue and its safety."*

Before dismissing the subject discussed in this section—a section that bears the same important relation to the other sections which follow, that a foundation does to the superstructure it supports, *I would warn my readers against several false standards which have been much countenanced, both in the speculations of political writers, and in the administrations of political rulers.*

1. *Human reason is an imperfect guide.* Doubtless, this is an invaluable faculty when applied to

* Theology, Vol. IV. 156, 157.

legitimate objects, and exerted within proper limits. It is a grand prerogative of man which raises him above the rank of the lower animals, unites him to the communion of the angelic spirits, and allies him to the nature of the Supreme Intelligence. It is a directress useful in teaching him many duties, an instrument qualified for the discovery of many truths, a torch kindled by the breath of heaven in the bosom for scattering a portion of that intellectual gloom which broods over the human soul. But, a torch is available by the traveller only when darkness, diffused over the earth, prevents him from finding his way with certainty, safety, and speed. Let the sun have emerged, amid orient splendour, into view, and poured a fresh flood of light over the whole scene upon which he is entering, surely he will find this superior to a thousand torches in showing him the road he should take, the noble landscapes he should enjoy, the splendid edifices he should admire, and the successive destinations at which he wishes to arrive. So is it with regard to the better light of Revelation. Since this intellectual luminary has been placed in the firmament of our moral world,—since it corrects the preconceived notions and rash conjectures of the human mind,—since it unveils the great objects for which government was instituted, the true principles of moral rectitude by which they are to be procured, and the eternal pleasures in heaven with which the pious administrators are to be graciously rewarded for all their arduous labours, surely those must act a very irrational part who prefer the feeble light of nature, around which the dense clouds of

ignorance have collected, and from which only a few straggling rays are emitted on moral subjects.

Unquestionably there is no state of cultivation attainable, in which the finite mind of man can, with propriety, be made the true criterion of civil polity. Though its powers were cultivated with great care from their earliest dawn, though its resources were enlarged with numerous accessions from the writings of the best authors, philosophical and historical, ancient and modern; though its stock of general principles were increased to an unrivalled extent by the fruits of accurate observation, correct thinking, and extensive correspondence, still it were not a guide equal to the Bible, which, with the highest authority, lays down principles of the greatest purity, and communicates facts of the last importance. "If our reason," says a learned civilian, "were always, as in our first ancestor before his transgression, clear and perfect, unruffled by passions, unclouded by prejudice, unimpaired by disease or intemperance, the task would be pleasant and easy; we should need no other guide but this. But every man now finds the contrary in his own experience,—that his reason is corrupt, and his understanding full of ignorance and error. This has given manifold occasion for the benign interposition of divine providence, which, in compassion to the frailty, the imperfection, and the blindness of human reason, hath been pleased, at sundry times and in divers manners, to discover and enforce its laws by an immediate and direct revelation. The doctrines thus delivered we call the revealed or divine law, and they are to be found only

in the Holy Scriptures. These precepts, when revealed, are found, upon comparison, to be really a part of the original law of nature, as they tend in all their consequences to man's felicity. But we are not from thence to conclude, that the knowledge of these truths was attainable by reason, in its present corrupted state; since we find that, until they were revealed, they were hid from the wisdom of ages. As then the moral precepts of this law are indeed of the same original with those of the law of nature, so their intrinsic obligation is of equal strength and perpetuity. Yet *undoubtedly the revealed law is of infinitely more authenticity than that moral system which is framed by ethical writers, and denominated the natural law:* because one is the law of nature, expressly declared to be by God himself; the other is only what, by the assistance of human reason, we imagine to be that law. If we could be as certain of the latter as we are of the former, both would have an equal authority; but till then, they can never be put in any competition together."*

2. *Natural conscience, too, is an imperfect guide.* I do not disparage the utility of this excellent principle in the human constitution. It is one of those original faculties which are the greatest gifts of our Creator, and the brightest distinctions of our nature. Different from the understanding, it suggests, by an immediate movement, the moral distinctions that have ever obtained, *right* and *wrong*,—*merit* and *demerit*,—*approbation* and *disapprobation*. Independent of

* Blackstone's Commentaries, Vol. I. p. 41, 42.

education, association, and other foreign influences, it announces its moral judgments with a striking promptitude, which contrasts with the slow processes of the intellect, and which neither the baser passions nor the bodily appetites can prevent or retard. In short, it inculcates many rules of virtuous action in all the walks of social life, and by the delightful sentiment of self-approbation, which ever accompanies the performance of good deeds, and even the conception of generous purposes, which have not sprung into corresponding *acts* from the want of physical power, contributes one of the strongest motives to their faithful observance. But still, with all due deference to its spontaneous suggestions,—its salutary warnings,—its pleasing reflections,—its encouraging anticipations, I cannot allow it to be an ultimate criterion of moral truth,—of genuine virtue, in a country on which the superior light of revelation has been conferred. Ought it not, as a derived faculty, as a dependent principle, to bow to the supreme authority,—the supernatural requirements of its Author? Surely, if a deputy should act according to the written instructions of the principal,—if a substitute should obey the rules laid down to him by his superior,—if a viceroy, placed in a distant province, should administer the trust confided to him according to the known laws of the constitution under which he is appointed, and the legitimate orders of the king in whose name he acts, then unquestionably ought conscience,—the mere vicegerent of Deity in the human bosom,—to receive, with immediate approbation, whatever doctrines he communicates, and

obey, with implicit readiness, whatever statutes he enacts. This would have been its bounden duty and its high privilege, even had its original soundness, which was perfect in primitive innocence, not been impaired by subsequent apostasy. How much more so now, when partial corruption has dimmed its discernment, and blunted its sensibility,—when the storm of contending passions within often drowns its feeble voice, and silences its wavering suggestions,—and when the array of false principles without easily resists its timid expostulations. When the Sovereign himself descends upon the earth, promulgating laws which created intellect could never have discovered, in language that mortal lips never could have breathed, and with an eloquence which human oratory could never have equalled, surely the deputy ought, with grateful adoration, with affectionate allegiance, to hear, learn, and obey.

It is, no doubt, a happy circumstance for a country, when its rulers *do* act from the dictates of *enlightened* consciences. Such rulers will pursue measures most advantageous to the community over which they preside, by respecting the principles of eternal justice, and imploring the blessings of the supreme Potentate. But, the appeals which the generality of them make to conscience ought to be regarded with great distrust,—with peculiar jealousy. They are often *hollow*, not justified by virtuous conduct in private life, nor supported by moral integrity in the management of public affairs. In short, there has never been a more prolific source of royal crimes in despotic governments, than this pretended regard

for conscience. Does the despot doom his subjects to brutal ignorance, by the prohibition, under the severest penalties, of free inquiry on national interests, and of intellectual education in public schools? it is all to soothe *his conscience*, which shudders at the thought of liberal opinions polluting their *pure* minds and perverting their *sound* principles. Does he persecute the pious, virtuous, and inoffensive followers of Jesus, consigning some to the gloomy dungeons of the inquisition, and subjecting others to atrocious cruelties at the stake? it is still to please *his conscience*, which trembles with horror at the circulation of the sacred scriptures, and the unrestricted exercise of the human faculties. Or, does he plunge his country into wars, consuming millions of its wealth, and murdering thousands of its citizens, for the nefarious purpose of supporting other tyrants who have trampled on the rights of *their* subjects, and squandered the resources of their countries? it is still farther to gratify that *same conscience* which has sanctioned such atrocities towards his own subjects, under the insulted name of virtue, and which, like a certain pagan deity that was never appeased but by the offering of human sacrifices, secures its own tranquillity only by murdering a multitude of human victims. In truth, whatever infringements his mischievous propensities make on the rights, liberties, and goods of the community,—whatever crusades he wages against the religious doctrines and political opinions they entertain,—whatever wars he prosecutes for the support of dynasties which have shed, in past centuries, the blood that now cries from the ground for threat-

ened vengeance on them, should they not repent, he shrinks not from the open avowal, that *conscience* gives him her fullest warrant, and rewards him with her highest approbation. Criminal hypocrisy! Intolerable effrontery! It was thus that the Stuarts of this country, and the Bourbons of France appealed to their consciences, when they were trampling under foot the first laws of the charters to which they had sworn, executing arbitrary orders issued with unblushing perfidy, massacring, in cold blood, thousands of their bravest citizens, and consummating the measure of that iniquity, for which, in righteous retribution, they were, with signal valour, hurled from thrones which they had proved themselves unworthy to occupy, and driven from kingdoms over which they were declared incompetent to reign. Let nations, as they value their just independence, and their genuine prosperity, beware how they countenance a guide that has impelled rulers to such disgraceful enormities, and how they delay the adoption of the divine law as an invariable standard which would teach them the culture of those private virtues with which their character should be adorned, and the performance of those public duties by which their reign should be illustrated.

3. *Nor is public opinion an infallible guide.* Let not any reader rashly infer from this position, before perusing the following remarks offered in explanation, that I undervalue such an important power as public opinion. I wish to appreciate, to the fullest extent compatible with truth and virtue, its great utility. I admit that, in framing political systems,

choosing the requisite officers, and making the successive alterations that experience may recommend, *it* deserves great weight. I admit that, in modern times, it is a strong barrier against the arbitrary encroachments of rulers on popular rights which they have not sufficient justice to respect, and on constitutional privileges which they have not sufficient fidelity to protect. I admit that, in many cases which are every day multiplying, it is a powerful stimulus to reforms which have hitherto been withheld—to the correction of gross abuses which heartless aristocracies have nourished for mercenary ends, and the adoption of liberal changes which injured communities demand for the general good. I even admit that, in a great measure, it secures the stability of any government that acts in accordance with its dictates; for, let rulers persist in a course of policy *opposed* to the explicit demands of the popular voice, strongly conceived and firmly expressed, they are as sure to be swept away from the seats which they occupy, by the strong tide of public opinion, as the loose sands thrown up upon the shore are by the tumultuous flow of the mighty waters. Still, with all these admissions, I cannot allow that public opinion is a correct criterion either of the truth of political doctrines, or of the virtue of political measures—for the two following reasons.

Consider, *first, that public opinion must ever be amenable to the authority of divine revelation.* It is only the opinion of mere creatures, who have been placed under the supreme control of that record both as individuals and as citizens. No relationship

into which they have entered, in their political character, can possibly release them from the obligation of holding the identical views that are taught with such clearness, simplicity, and force in that inspired book. When they consider, with due solemnity, the high relation in which they stand to the Supreme Ruler,—the universal submission which they owe Him, in using their rational powers, no less than in cherishing their moral feelings,—and the future account which they must render to Him for whatever ideas they have entertained, as well as for whatever actions they have performed, they should feel that, on the whole field of political science, they have no other legitimate guide than *his* revealed, immutable, and eternal law. This is the true line that will lead them amid the dreary labyrinths of error with which they must meet—the pole-star that will guide them on the stormy and perilous ocean of controversy on which they may be sometimes tossed.

Consider, in the next place, that *public opinion not unfrequently requires rulers to do what is morally wrong.* Were the great majority of the people in a country correctly enlightened and truly virtuous, their opinions would deserve the utmost deference; because, on the conditions specified, these opinions would coincide with the principles of moral rectitude, imperfectly traced on the natural mind, and fully expounded in the sacred volume. But, how often have we to lament that degradation of intellect, and that corruption of feeling, which disqualify them for forming any views entitled to cordial respect or unqualified adoption. How often are we sickened

with the disgusting scenes of ignorance and licentiousness, political corruption and daring impiety, exhibited by multitudes who would dictate laws to the inhabitants of a mighty empire, and prescribe remedies for the evils of a distracted country. In short, public opinion, unless it is the result of sounder instruction and purer feeling than have ever yet directed the public mind in any country, is a most dangerous guide in politics, sometimes resisting changes required by the sacred principles of justice and humanity, and sometimes demanding concessions which would have produced the most injurious effects. Usually, indeed, it has been shortsighted, selfish, and intractable, founded in pitiable ignorance, supported with incorrigible obstinacy, and uttered with imperturbable insolence. By it, crimes, at which humanity shudders and pity revolts, have been perpetrated. It was *this* which caused the erection of idolatry among the Hebrews, at different times, contrary to the explicit injunctions of the living God. It was *this* which occasionally covered Judea with swarms of false prophets, who courted popular applause by teaching many irrational dogmas, and many absurd observances. It was this which, proclaimed with unwearied virulence, drove the chief rulers of the Jews to commit that unparalleled crime which has stained their annals with indelible reproach, and punished themselves with unprecedented sufferings. And, did we review the pages of uninspired history, we should find various occasions on which the same power has sanctioned doctrines that were a disgrace to the human intellect, and urged

political enactments that were a curse to a civilized country.

But, what are rulers to do, it may be asked, when required, by popular opinion, to perform an act which revelation has prohibited in express terms, or by its general spirit? Why, there are two courses open which they can pursue. They can, first of all, furnish the people with the means of correct information respecting the injustice, the inexpediency, and the danger of the step which they are urging. By rational arguments addressed to their judgments, by forcible appeals presented to their consciences, and by correct calculations relative to their temporal interests, which can never prosper on the ruins of moral obligations, they can strive to convince them, that what they are asking is in itself unjust, and in its effects injurious. I do not say that, for this purpose, they should quit the posts at which they are placed in the capital, and make a progress through the provinces as public instructors. But why should not they remove all the existing obstructions to the diffusion of useful knowledge over the country,—afford all possible facilities to the circulation of sound views through the very humblest channels,—and, in short, use all conceivable means of rendering a government, exercised over a nation of rational beings, what it ought ever to be—*a government of persuasion?**

* "It is no excuse at all for a minister" of the crown, "who, at our desire, takes a measure contrary to our safety, that it is our own act. He who does not stay the hand of suicide is guilty of murder. On our part I say, that to be instructed is not to be degraded or enslaved. *Information is an advantage to us, and we have a right to demand it.* He that

Should they fail to correct the errors of public opinion in this way, they have another alternative left—retirement from offices which they cannot hold longer without committing moral evil. Doubtless the sacrifice of power, emolument, and influence may prove painful, in proportion to the ambition, avarice, and vanity which they indulge. But, if they feel the strict conscientiousness which *should* reign in their breasts, and the enlightened patriotism which *should* dictate their proceedings, they will, in the circumstances supposed, make it with cheerfulness. Since they cannot discharge their high functions without violating the divine law and incurring the lasting reproaches of their own minds, they will forthwith withdraw into solitude, that they may carry with them unimpaired the dignity of public virtue, the consolation of approving consciences,* and the sincere admiration of enlightened

is bound to act in the dark cannot be said to act freely. When it appears evident to our governors, that our desires and our interests are at variance, they ought not to gratify the former at the expense of the latter. Statesmen are placed on an eminence, that they may have a larger horizon than we can possibly command. *They* have a whole before them, which we can contemplate only in the parts, and often without the necessary relations. *Reason,* clearly and manfully delivered, has in itself a mighty force; but *reason,* in the mouth of legal authority, is, I may fairly say, irresistible."—*Burke. Howard's Beauties of Literature.* Vol. v. p. 126, 127.

* "When a competition takes place between our sense of duty and a regard to public opinion; if we sacrifice the former to the latter, we are filled with remorse and self-condemnation; and the applauses of the multitude afford us but an empty and unsatisfactory recompense; whereas a steady adherence to the right never fails to be its own reward, even when it exposes us to calumny and misrepresentation."—*Outlines of Moral Philosophy,* 156, 157.

citizens. Their fall, which, like death, canonizes great characters, will be looked back upon as the most felicitous event in their distinguished career; and future historians, warmed with admiration, will point to it as the noblest triumph of disinterested virtue over the stronger temptations to the baser passions.

4. *Neither is the present constitution an ultimate standard.* It is, indeed, the grand instrument, according to which the executive rulers should govern. It contains the fundamental laws they should execute, the specific penalties they should inflict, and the chief ends at which they should aim. It declares the fixed limits beyond which they cannot carry their discretion with impunity, and the political rights on which they cannot encroach, without forfeiting the offices to which they thus become unfaithful. But still, as a human production, marked with the imperfections of the finite minds, and remote ages, in which it originated, it cannot be regarded as a fixed criterion on which no alterations must ever be made. It must *itself*, in all its original principles and subsequent additions, be tried by a *higher standard*, even with all the admiration called forth by its distinguishing excellencies. Though these excellencies have called forth the marked applauses of intelligent citizens,—though they have been extolled in the speeches of many senators eminent for their talents, learning, and patriotism,—though they have been proved by their surviving the terrific convulsions which have dashed to pieces other systems, like some powerful vessel that has rode the storms which

have reduced others to a perfect wreck, yet must even *they* be placed in the balance of divine revelation, which weighs, in its impartial scales, the decisions of human wisdom, and the decrees of human authority.

No notion is more contemptible, than that the political institutions of our ancestors must not be revised, examined, and improved. "There are some men," says Dr. Johnson, "of narrow views, and grovelling conceptions, who, without the instigation of personal malice, treat every new attempt as wild and chimerical; and look upon every endeavour to depart from the beaten tract, as the rash effort of a warm imagination, or the glittering speculation of an exalted mind, that may please and dazzle for a time, but can produce no real or lasting advantage. Such have been the most formidable enemies of the great benefactors of the world; for their notions and discourse are so agreeable to the lazy, the envious, and the timorous, that they seldom fail of becoming popular, and directing the opinions of mankind."*

"Who will be hardy enough to assert, that a better constitution is not attainable than any which has hitherto appeared? Is the limit of human wisdom to be estimated in the science of politics alone, by the extent of its present attainments? Is the most sublime and difficult of all arts, the improvement of the social order, the alleviation of the miseries of the civil condition of man, to be alone stationary, amid the rapid progress of every other art, liberal and vulgar,

* Life of Drake.

to perfection? Where would be the atrocious guilt of a grand experiment, to ascertain the portion of freedom and happiness that can be created by political institutions? Legislators are under no obligation to retain a constitution, because it has been found "*tolerably* to answer the common purposes of government." It is absurd to *expect*, but it is not absurd to *pursue*, perfection. It is absurd to acquiesce in evils, of which the remedy is obvious, because they are less grievous than those which are endured by others. To suppose the social order is not capable of improvement from the progress of the human understanding, is to betray the inconsistent absurdity of an arrogant confidence in our attainments, and an abject distrust of our powers. If, indeed, the sum of evil produced by political institutions, even in the least imperfect governments, were small, there might be some pretence for this dread of innovation, this horror at remedy, which has raised such a clamour over Europe: but, on the contrary, in an estimate of the sources of human misery, after granting that one portion is to be attributed to disease, and another to private vices, it might perhaps be found, that a *third equal* part arose from the oppressions and corruptions of governments, disguised under various forms. A government of *art*, the work of legislative intellect, reared on the immutable basis of natural right and general happiness, which should combine the excellencies, and exclude the defects of the various constitutions which chance had scattered over the world, instead of being precluded by the perfection of any of those forms, is loudly demanded by the injustice and ab-

surdity of them all. It is time, that men should learn to tolerate nothing ancient that reason does not respect, and to shrink from no novelty to which reason may conduct. It is time, that the human powers, so long occupied by subordinate objects and inferior arts, should mark the commencement of a new era in history, by giving birth to the art of improving government, and increasing the civil happiness of man. It is time, as it has been wisely and eloquently said, that legislators, instead of that narrow and dastardly *coasting* which never ventures to lose sight of usage and precedent, should, guided by the *polarity* of reason, hazard a bolder navigation, and discover, in unexplored regions, the treasure of public felicity." *

5. *The only other false standard I shall wait to expose is expediency.* However plausible the reasonings by which this criterion has been supported, and however distinguished the names from which it has derived its present reputation, it cannot be held, without very great limitations, by any sincere friend of good morals. No doubt, in the management of national affairs, cases may occur on which rulers cannot decide without referring to *this* standard. Neither the principles of moral rectitude, nor the laws of divine revelation, nor the provisions of the political code, may furnish any directions, as to the decision they should give. What then *can* they do, but have recourse to this very standard—*utility*, and prefer,

* Vindiciæ Gallicæ, by Sir James Mackintosh, 109—117.

on comparison, that course which promises the greatest amount of happiness attainable in the existing circumstances, without violating any moral obligations. Still the number of such cases, it is presumed, must be very small, especially in countries where the art of virtuous legislation has made any progress. Rulers, who are sincerely desirous of learning the divine will as the true guide of their administrations, by the devout study of the laws announced in the sacred writings, and by the careful examination of the suggestions offered by the moral faculty, will usually find some general principle recommended by its moral nature, for the determination of almost every case that arises in the wide circle of their numerous duties. And where such a principle *can* be found, they are bound to employ their utmost efforts for its discovery, and exemplify their strictest conscientiousness in its observance, assured that a *rigid adherence to moral principle* is the only course that will secure to themselves the divine approbation, and to their measures the divine blessing. Against *expediency* I urge the two following remarks.

First, *it subverts the foundation of all morality.* Morality, unlike the arbitrary rules which have been formed by mere politicians about *things indifferent*, does not derive its obligations from human authority. It does not depend on the decisions of created intellect, the enactments of legislative wisdom, or any of those *accidental* distinctions which arise in society, from the operation of external causes. It depends on the moral sentiments, which arise spontaneously in the mind independently of mere reason-

ing, and which are the objects of approbation or disapprobation, of pleasure or pain, irrespective of the actual results which they produce. It is founded on the moral distinctions, which have been fixed irrevocably by the fiat of the *supreme* lawgiver,—which are discovered in our original constitution before our education has modified our various judgments,—and which are invariable in all countries under every variety of civil government. Now, I accuse *expediency* of overlooking entirely these moral distinctions—of suppressing the natural dictates of conscience,—of removing the sacred boundaries of virtue,—and of laying the whole structure of political morality in ruins at our feet. "A callous indifference to all moral distinctions," says Hall, "is an almost inseparable effect of the familiar application of this theory. Virtue is no longer contemplated as the object of any particular *sentiment* or *feeling*, but solely with regard to its effects on society; it is what it *produces*, not what it *is*, that is alone considered; just as an accountant is indifferent to the *shape* and *appearance* of the figures, and attends simply to their amount. Crimes and virtues are equally *candidates* for approbation; nor must the heart betray the least preference, which would be to prejudge the cause, but must maintain a sacred neutrality, till expedience, whose hand never trembles in the midst of the greatest horrors, has weighed in her impartial balance their consequences and effects. Hence that intrepidity in guilt which has cased the hearts of the greatest adepts in this system as with treble brass. I cannot help express-

27385

ing my apprehension that this desecration of virtue, this incessant dominion of physical over moral ideas, of ideas of expedience over those of right, having already dethroned religion, and displaced virtue from her ancient basis, will, if it is suffered to proceed, ere long shake the foundations of states, and endanger the existence of the civilized world."*

Second, *it pours contempt on the most approved examples recorded in the Bible. There* are presented to our view, pious kings, whose mode of government was attended with the happiest effects to the community, and with the distinguished approbation of Deity. What standard did *they* prefer? Did they prefer their limited views of *utility?* Did they consider, before adopting any measure of policy, merely its practical tendency to impart physical happiness or to produce temporal advantages? No; *right* was the grand guide which *they* followed in all their official procedure, which commanded so signally the divine blessing, and which promoted so successfully human happiness. Hence, in the inspired panegyrics which history has pronounced upon them, a principal theme is, that they "*did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all his commandments.*"† What modern rulers, alive to the momentous trust which they have undertaken, and the awful responsibility which they have brought themselves under,

* Sentiments proper to the present crisis, pp. 48—51.

† See 1 Kings xiv. 8; xv. 11; xxii. 43. 2 Kings xiv. 3; xviii. 3; xxii. 2, for the enviable portraits which have been drawn of David, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Amaziah, Hezekiah, and Josiah.

would not wish a similar testimony to their *moral rectitude?* I know, base flatterers would persuade them,—no difficult task in many cases,—that they are absolved from the immutable obligations of morality by which other classes are bound,—that political power is a trust which justifies numerous artifices that would be scorned in private life,—that management, intrigue, hollow pretensions and insidious stratagems are perfectly allowable in compassing political ends. But I know with equal certainty, that high as their station is, they *are* subjected to the laws of everlasting rectitude,—that rectitude of which the true original dwells in heaven, and the living germs grow in every virtuous bosom—that rectitude which binds in delightful harmony the ranks of angelic beings, and spreads its purest brilliance over the doings of the supreme ruler—that rectitude which forms the chief pillar of the intellectual universe, and imparts order, and beauty, and grandeur even to that which is material. Can they prosper without *this*—this "*righteousness which exalteth a nation?*" Yes; when they can construct their palaces on the craters of volcanoes, employ their navies without launching them on the watery element, and transport their armies without allowing them to tread the solid earth.

This practice of reducing every moral question in politics to a calculation of expediency, is condemned not merely by theologians. From two authors of a different description,—the one a celebrated moralist, and the other a distinguished civilian,—I shall quote appropriate extracts, in which sentiments

are taught that command equally our respect, our approbation, and our support.

"That we have a *sense of duty*, which is not resolvable into a regard to our happiness, appears," says Professor Stewart, "from various considerations. Although philosophers have shown, that a sense of duty, and an enlightened regard to our own happiness, conspire, in most instances, to give the same direction to our conduct, so as to put it beyond a doubt, that even in this world, a virtuous life is true wisdom; yet this is a truth by no means obvious to the common sense of mankind, but deduced from an extensive view of human affairs, and an accurate investigation of the remote consequences of our different actions. It is from experience and reflection, therefore, that we learn the tendency of virtue to advance our worldly prosperity; and, consequently, the *great lessons of morality, which are obvious to the capacities of all mankind, cannot have been suggested to them merely by a regard to their own interest.—The obligations of justice are by no means resolvable into considerations of utility.* To illustrate the general principles of justice and expediency, as they are actually combined in the constitution of society, will show how wonderfully these principles coincide in their applications; and how partial those conceptions of utility are, which have so often led politicians to depart from what they feel to be just, in quest of what their limited judgment apprehended to be expedient."*

* Outlines, 118, 120, 263, 264.

"Such reasoning, taken in its proper extent, *impeaches*," says Sir James Mackintosh, "*the great system of morals, of which political principles form only a part.* It would be fatal to the existence of morality, if the utility of every *particular act* were to be the subject of deliberation in the mind of every moral agent. A general moral maxim is to be obeyed, even if the inutility is evident, because the precedent of deviating more than balances any utility that may exist in the particular deviation. Political first principles are of this description. They are only moral principles adapted to the civil union of men. The same necessity for the substitution of general maxims exists in politics as in morals. These precise and inflexible principles, which yield neither to the seductions of passion, nor the suggestions of interest, ought to be the guide of public as well as private morals. Acting according to the natural rights of men, is only another expression for acting according to those *general maxims of social morals* which prescribe what is *right and fit* in human intercourse. We have proved that the social compact does not alter these maxims, or destroy these rights, and it incontestably follows from the same principles which guide all morality, that no expediency can justify their infraction. The inflexibility of general principles is, indeed, perhaps more necessary in political morals than in any other class of actions. Far more necessary is the obedience to general principles, and the maintenance of natural rights, in politics than in the morality of common life. The moment that the slenderest infraction of these rights is

permitted for motives of *convenience*, the bulwark of all upright politics is lost. If a small convenience will justify a little infraction, a greater pretended convenience will expiate a bolder violation. The Rubicon is past. Tyrants never seek in vain for sophists. Pretences are multiplied without difficulty and without end. Nothing, therefore, but an inflexible adherence to the principles of general right can preserve the purity, consistency, and stability of a free state."*

* Vindiciæ Gallicæ, 215, 219.

SECTION III.

THE ORIGIN OF POLITICAL GOVERNMENT.

SURVEYING the conduct of our modern politicians, it is mortifying to find the extreme solicitude with which the great majority exclude from politics all *solemn* reference to the Deity. By them, treatises the most elaborate are composed, debates the most learned prosecuted, and even laws, on the execution of which the temporal interests of millions are suspended, enacted, without one pious allusion to *Him* under whose absolute control they are placed, and to whose supreme tribunal they are responsible. Whatever deference they pay to the judgments of fallible writers, and whatever praise they bestow on the services of successful statesmen, they are resolved they shall yield no public homage to *Him* in whose book the purest policy is prescribed, and by whose blessing the greatest prosperity is produced. Never, indeed, were the builders of houses more anxious to secure them against the ravages of fire and the inundations of water, or the guardians of

cities more solicitous to protect them from the incursions of an enemy and the desolations of the plague, than they are to defend their systems from the smallest intrusion of the supreme Potentate and the slightest application of his revealed will.

Now this deliberate exclusion of God from the affairs of civil government, appears to me pregnant with *impiety*. Let not rulers continue to deceive themselves with the trite sophism, that they are thus guarding against the pollution of fanaticism and the prostitution of religion. They are, evidently, doing a great deal more, for which their consciences aroused shall, one day, reproach them, and their Judge provoked shall, one day, call them to an account. They are refusing, in the face of the highest obligations, the official subjection which they owe Him, with whatever functions they are invested, and by whatever titles they are distinguished,—a subjection inseparable both from the dependent natures with which they are clothed, and the delegated offices with which they are entrusted,—a subjection to which He can no more forego his title, even for a single hour, than he can relinquish the everlasting rectitude which adorns his character, or circumscribe the universal sovereignty which he possesses over all his creatures. It is well, no doubt, that they preserve religion from profanation in every shape in which this crime can be committed; and, surely, if this were their real object, they would never turn into ridicule either its peculiar language, or its approved friends. The announcement of its sacred maxims in the senate would not be met with bursts

of impious laughter, nor an appeal to its solemn sanctions repelled by strokes of grave humour. Is it not obvious to all men of ordinary penetration, that its unceasing exclusion from politics under the plea of its peculiar sacredness, is, in many cases, *a mere pretext*, not a true allegation,—a pretext under which they would conceal that rooted aversion to genuine piety in their proceedings which they do not find it convenient to avow,—a pretext by which they would arrogate to themselves credit for the greatest reverence of religion, while they are treating it in effect with the utmost contempt,—a pretext which, while it awakens virtuous abhorrence in the minds of honest observers, draws down, from the eyes of Omniscient purity, all the fire of righteous indignation and hallowed scorn. Oh, when will they learn the simplest of all truths, that religion never receives from them higher honour than when she presides in high authority, over all the powers of their active minds, and pours her lustre over all the proceedings of their public lives; just as the sun never attracts deeper admiration than when, in his meridian brightness, he has penetrated into the deepest recesses that are accessible to his beams, and illumined the remotest regions that are exposed to his splendours.

Nor is this exclusion of God from political government *less unphilosophical* than it is impious. Is it not the delight of the philosopher to trace up effects to their original causes,—to analyze objects into their elementary principles, to ascend the great chain of causation with its thousand links, till he has reached

the last, hid from ordinary eyes in a distant region, or in a remote age? Does not he experience distinguished pleasure when he has discovered the origin of the phenomena that have arrested general observation, unravelled difficulties that have perplexed ordinary minds, and elicited general principles that no course of experiments had ever suggested to previous inquirers? Long may this philosophic spirit prevail, enlarging the stock of valuable information, multiplying the number of useful inventions, increasing the sum of intellectual enjoyments, and extending the triumphs of the human mind over the domains of inanimate matter. But in the ardent investigation of causes in any science, why stop short of the great *First Cause?* Why, after mounting up, by many tedious steps, to the threshold of heaven, refuse to gaze with the mind's eye on the Eternal Creator? Why, after centuries of boasted illumination have rolled away, convert philosophy into a veil that hides from our view the splendours of the Supreme Intelligence, instead of a mirror from which they might be reflected with impressive lustre? Why, after so many governments of merely human origin have perished in the vortex of successive revolutions, refuse that scriptural polity which, having emanated from the uncreated excellence, survives the ruins of human systems, and imparts advantages never derived from any invention of finite skill?

It has been occasionally disputed, whether government is an institution of Deity, or an institution of man. Should we adopt either theory to the entire exclusion of the other, we will undoubtedly betray.

a culpable narrowness of mind, and leave untold an important part of truth. The real fact is, that government has, in different senses, sprung from both sources; and it should be our endeavour to ascertain these, with as much accuracy as cautious discrimination can command, and present information afford.

I. The primary origin of political government is the will of God.* That He who formed man for the enjoyment of innocent pleasure suited to their various capacities, should institute government, seems exceedingly natural. It is just what we should have expected from the operation in Him of infinite benevolence, unerring wisdom, and sovereign authority. It is right, becoming, and beneficial, that he should provide for their wants in a state of society, and stamp with his authority an institution worthy of the supreme goodness in which it has originated, and productive of the numerous effects for which it has been appointed.

1. *God has prepared man for the social union by planting in his breast the social principle.* This principle—the source of so many exquisite enjoyments and so many important duties—is not an acquired principle. It is not the result either of early education, of civil usages, or of any other external influences operating on his mind, during the earlier stages of his past existence. It is the *gift of his Creator*—an affection interwoven with the original

* "Government is founded in the will of God."—Dwight, vol. iv. p. 132.

texture of his moral frame, coeval with those moral feelings that show themselves even in helpless infancy, and independent of the various advantages that accrue from the various social arrangements to which it leads. With what eagerness does the schoolboy fly from solitude, though recommended by peculiar privileges, and rush into the midst of congenial associates, though surrounded with various dangers. What satisfaction animates his countenance, when he re-enters the little circle from which he has been several hours absent,—resumes the juvenile sports common in his narrow vicinity,—and rehearses, in the ears of companions whom he loves, the fruits of private studies which he enjoys. What sadness would oppress his heart, were he shut up, as a punishment for some delinquency, for a few successive hours,—forbidden to have the slightest intercourse with his playmates, and thrown back on his own private reflections under restraints which solitude renders doubly grievous. Now, in fixing in the bosom of all individuals a *social* feeling so strong, even in the earliest period of life, has not *God indicated his will*, that they should unite into political societies for mutual convenience,—that, instead of retiring into caves for perfect solitude, they should meet together for social happiness, and, under the shade of a political system organized according to his law, enjoy those political privileges for which such gracious provision has been made in their original constitution? It is perfectly allowable, it is eminently philosophical, to infer his will from "those principles which we obtain from an examination of

the human constitution, and of the general laws which regulate the course of human affairs; principles, which are certainly the result of a much more extensive induction than any of the inferences that can be drawn from the history of actual establishments."*

2. *God has farther fitted man for the social union, by endowing him with a variety of moral sentiments not necessary to his private happiness.* Had man been destined only for the selfish enjoyments of perpetual solitude, there was no need to endow him with any of those affections that interest him so deeply in the welfare of his fellow-creatures. He might just have been furnished with the single principle of self-love in its present strength, and dismissed into the deepest solitudes to seek happiness in the untrodden wilds of nature, in the succession of his own private thoughts, and the anticipation of his own immortal destiny. But, that he has been intended for social life appears from that system of higher principles developed in his original nature, by which he is fitted for its duties and its privileges, its pleasures and its trials. How important is *love*—that principle which binds him to his fellow-men by ties additional to those of a common origin, seeks their welfare by practical efforts, and increases his own felicity by the very means he uses for augmenting theirs! How important is *gratitude*—that principle which warms his bosom with a lively sense of kindness received, stimulates to unceasing acts of disinterested beneficence, and rewards those

* Stewart's Elements, vol. i. p. 238.

good offices which conduce so much to the real happiness of society! How important is *pity*—that principle which outstrips the cold calculations of the understanding, and dissolves the frozen obduracy of the heart,—which, embracing within its range the wretched of every name, diminishes their sorrows by its soothing offices, and relieves their wants by its liberal supplies! How important is *veracity*—that principle which impels him to speak the truth in all his communications, sustains the confidence essential to the multifarious transactions of a country, and is met by a corresponding principle coeval with the use of language—*that which disposes us to repose faith in testimony!* How important is *justice*—that principle which restrains the encroachments of rapacious selfishness, preserves the limits of virtuous benevolence, regulates the affairs of commercial activity, and constitutes the palladium of a nation's noblest privileges! How important is *generosity*—that principle which exceeds the narrow limits of strict justice, confers happiness even on enemies in their distress, diminishes the present sufferings it cannot remove, provides against the future calamities it cannot avert, and diffuses, even by the limited means placed at its disposal, an amount of actual enjoyment never sought by the cool calculations and the measured steps of *mere* probity! Who that examines these moral principles in the constitution of man, and marks their original implantation, their mutual connexions, and their beneficial effects, does not see, that he is, in an eminent degree, fitted, by his Creator, for the great duties and the great privileges

of the social order? Indeed, "as man, excepting in his rudest state, has been always found connected with a political community, *the principles which lay the foundation of this species of union may be regarded as universal and essential principles of our constitution;* and, without an examination of them, it is impossible for us to have a just idea of our situation in the world, and of the most important duties we owe to our fellow-creatures. It is in the *political union*, and in the gradual improvement of which it is susceptible, that nature has made a provision for a gradual development of our intellectual and *moral powers*, and for a proportional employment in our capacities of enjoyment."*

3. *God has still farther prepared man for the social union, by prescribing a multitude of appropriate precepts in the Scriptures.* There is much, indeed, recorded in this inspired volume which has, evidently, been addressed to man *as an individual.* As an individual, he is commanded to love, venerate, honour, obey, and enjoy God. As an individual, he is required to observe, with habitual conscientiousness, prayer, meditation, reading the Scriptures, hearing the Gospel, and other religious duties conducive to the spiritual improvement and the genuine happiness of his mind. As an individual, he is enjoined to practise prudence, fortitude, and temperance,—to control his natural inclinations, and corporeal appetites,—to cultivate virtuous dispositions and religious affections,—to provide for his temporal comfort and

* Stewart's Outlines, 12, 13.

his everlasting welfare. But, those must have read the book of Revelation to little purpose, who imagine that it addresses him only as an individual, and as a creature related, under various aspects, to the Supreme Being. In what a variety of precepts, and with what a tone of authority does it speak to him as a *social being!* As a social being, it requires him to love his neighbours as himself—to do to others as he would wish others, placed in his circumstances, to do to him. As a social being, it requires him to maintain justice, honesty, and candour, benevolence, sympathy, forbearance, forgiveness, and charity. As a social being, it prescribes the duties obligatory on him in all his natural relations, in all his civil alliances, and in all his varying circumstances. Different from the lofty abstractions of science which court admiration in the schools, it descends to every walk of social life, from the chief summits of society to its lowest vales, preceding him with its simple instructions and celestial mandates, warning him of surrounding dangers and opposing difficulties, and pointing to Heaven whence gracious aid and ample rewards are promised. In one word, as a social being, it furnishes him with a code of morals unequalled* for their purity, spirituality, and authority, the sublimity of the principles on which they are founded, the grandeur of the motives by which they are enforced, and the extent of human

* The unrivalled superiority of the Christian morality has been admitted even by some of the most determined infidels. "The religion of Christ," says Rousseau, "has brought morality to greater purity and perfection, than ever it was advanced by all the philosophers and sages of antiquity."—Letters written from the Mountains.

affairs to which they are applicable. Say, is not *this* an invaluable preparation for improving the condition of political communities, inculcating the sacred principles on which they should act, fixing the immutable rules to which they should submit, and procuring the great objects they should seek under an approved administration of their affairs?

4. *But my chief remark under this division is, that God has recognised political government in the scriptures, by giving numerous directions respecting the duties both of public rulers and of private citizens.* It is a task of extreme difficulty to convince those, who allege that revelation has nothing to do with the politics of Christian states, of the truth of this important proposition. No amount of Scriptural proof, no train of forcible reasoning, is sufficient to disabuse *their* minds of their inveterate prejudices—their unexamined opinions. Secure in an impregnable fortress of false maxims generally received, and of immoderate self-esteem fondly indulged, they hold out, with singular hardihood worthy of a better cause, against even the polished weapons of divine truth and sound logic. They are in the perplexing predicament of those who, though the sun shines in the heavens with the greatest brightness, should clamour for formal proof, ere they could banish the absurd doubts that have arisen in their minds, and admit the rational belief that claims entrance into their hearts. Writers, however, never profess to impart either *understanding*, or *candour*, or *conviction*, even in the most limited measure, to their readers: they only endeavour to state the *grounds* of the judgments they have adopted in a

style intelligible to ordinary capacities, and not offensive to good feelings. Now, from the very face of revelation the following facts, respecting the divine origin of government, are abundantly evident.

God has elevated civil government to a place among divine institutions, by recognising its existence, defining its objects, and prescribing its general principles. For evidence of this, I do not refer merely to the Old Testament in which political principles of a moral character are laid down with great clearness, and remain obligatory on civil rulers in all succeeding ages. I refer also to the New Testament, in which the same principles are substantially reiterated with greater brevity, recommended by their unequalled purity, and enforced under the most impressive sanctions. Take the following passage as an example:— "*Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers; for there is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever, therefore, resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same; for he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain; for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For this cause, pay you tribute also; for they are God's ministers, attending continually on this very*

thing. Render, therefore, to all their dues; tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour.

Had this single delineation been considered with due attention by political writers, they had never degraded government to the rank of a human invention. They had never placed it on a level with those mechanical arts that can boast no higher origin than human genius, and yield no greater benefits than animal gratifications. They had, at once, raised it to the rank of a divine ordinance—an ordinance dictated by infinite benevolence, sanctioned by supreme authority, and subservient to the great interests of mankind. "I never, in the course of my reading," affirms a superior writer, "met with so perfect a description of the nature, the duty, the province, and the design of civil government, in so short a compass, as we find in the first six verses of this chapter. Without reference to any particular country, but with a perfect applicability to all, the apostle lays down the *doctrine of civil sovereignty*, according to the Christian law; and he affords another evidence of a truth, which ought never to be forgotten by those who consider man in his social character, that the revealed will of God embraces the true philosophy of government. *These* are not the words of a vain philosopher, carelessly slumbering over ideal plans of reform. They are words of truth." †

* Romans xiii. 1—7.

† M'Leod's Scriptural View, 113, 114.

Political government flows from God, not as the head of the mediatorial system, but as the supreme governor of the moral universe. This distinction has been recognised, admitted, and avowed in the most judicious creeds which have been published. "*God,*" says one, "*the supreme Lord and King of all the world, hath ordained civil magistrates to be under him, over the people, for his own glory, and the public good.*" * "*Magistracy,*" says another, "*is a divine ordinance, flowing originally from Jehovah, the supreme and universal Sovereign of heaven and earth, as the ultimate fountain thereof.*" † It is no slight error those fall into who allege, that government has sprung from the mediatorial system as its primary fountain, and is applicable to mankind only as fallen creatures living under that economy. Were this notion well founded, it would follow, that government does not arise out of the social affections growing in their original constitutions, and the natural relations established among them living in political society. It would follow that, had they remained in their original state of perfect innocence, they should never have been furnished with its salutary restrictions and peculiar privileges; never raised from that supposed state of nature in which every individual was left to the dominion of his own private inclinations, unrestricted, in the smallest degree, by the forms of mutual government. But would not this state have been diametrically opposed to

* Westminster Confession, chap. xxiii. sect. 1.
† Testimony of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, p. 111.

their original nature, which has so evidently been framed for the bonds of social union, the duties of citizenship, and the privileges of government? Would it not have left dormant the whole system of social affections so prominent in their moral constitution, and unenjoyed the whole fund of social pleasures so liberally provided for them by their gracious Creator? Would it not have distinguished them, by a gross anomaly, from the higher race of intelligent beings in heaven who have been arranged into distinct orders called "*thrones, dominions, principalities, powers,*"* and who present, in their magnificent hierarchy, a model of the most exact government? I repeat, therefore, that this political ordinance does not flow directly from the will of the Mediator, or from the grace in which has originated the scheme of human redemption,—that it has proceeded, primarily, from the will of the "Supreme Sovereign," under whose control all races of rational creatures are, from the first moment of their existence, necessarily placed, and to whose benevolent sway all political communities would, from their earliest organization, have been necessarily subject, even though they had not fallen from their primeval condition. "*Who would not fear thee, O king of nations? for to thee doth it appertain.*" †

Let us, at the same time, remember that while God is the original fountain of all magistratical authority, *he has placed it under the supreme control of the Mediator.* How evident soever this truth is

* Col. i. 16. † Jerem. x. 7.

from the very surface of revelation, it has, in some quarters, been contradicted. With a show of critical acumen which has drawn distinctions where no differences existed, it has been argued that He has received no dominion over *temporal kingdoms* and *political rulers.* But how shall we reconcile this denial with the express statements so often repeated in the scriptures? There we read, that "*all things are delivered to*" him "*of his Father*"—that "*all power is given to*" him "*in heaven and in earth,*"—that "*God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth,*"—that, in short, "*he hath set him at his own right hand in heavenly places, far above all principality and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and hath put all things under his feet, and given him to be the head over all things to the church.*"* Now, have we any intimation, that nations in their political character, and rulers in their official capacity, are *exceptions?* None whatever, at least in the sacred writings, from which alone we can derive certain information on this subject; and the dogmatic assertions, interspersed in some uninspired publications of the last century, receive in these latter times from candid minds, no respect, as they possess no authority. We think, with amazement, of those who, perverting the explicit declara-

* Matth. xi. 27, 28. Phil. ii. 9, 10. Ephes. i. 20, 21, 22.

tions of the Bible, have attempted to *restrict* the power of our Redeemer to the narrow field and the partial interests of the church. We review, with astonishment, their reiterated efforts to exclude his reign from the wider regions of civil society, and the general concerns of civil governments. When we behold the subjects of an earthly potentate rejoicing in every legitimate extension of his official power, in every addition to his ample territories, and in every exercise of his loyal adherents, who revere his person while they augment his revenues, we do feel, that the genuine friends of Prince Messiah, should have hailed, with unmingled joy, the proclamation of *his* reign over all the kingdoms of this lower world, all the departments of civil magistracy, and all the elements of the material universe. It should have been matter of unceasing gratitude, that his vicarious sufferings had been rewarded with the throne of universal empire—that the illimitable regions of space had been put under his sceptre, and that all created beings, from the minutest insect that dances in the sunbeam, to the mightiest angel that rejoices in the heavens, had been subjected to his rule. It should have been matter of hallowed rivalry to resent the gross indignities put upon his name, and the impious infringements committed on his rights, by earthly princes, who have attempted, with awful audacity, to "*break asunder*"* the bands of those righteous laws which he has imposed upon them, and, with sacrilegious hands, to pluck out the brightest gems in the crown that flou-

* Psalm ii. 2, 3.

rishes upon his head. But better days shall soon dawn. Additional to the pertinent passages quoted in the previous section,* the following encourage the most glowing expectations, and animate to the most fervent prayers. "*Ask of me,*" says the Father, "*and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron, thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.*"† "*Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, and glorify thy name? for all nations shall come and worship before thee.*"‡ "*And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.*"§

I shall add, on this part of the subject, only one other remark, *that all virtuous rulers derive their authority from the Deity.* Without countenancing such a contemptible absurdity as the divine right, in the ordinary sense in which that phrase has been used, we must maintain that *He* is the original fountain from which they obtain the powers with which they are entrusted by the choice of the community. What are they but creatures called into existence by his fiat—their bodies but material structures erected by his skill—their minds but finite spirits communicated by his breath—their capacities but so many modes of pleasurable activity bestowed upon them

* Pages 69, 70. † Psalm ii. 8, 9. ‡ Rev. xv. 3, 4. § Dan. vii. 14.

by his goodness? What are the stations they hold in society, but stations to which they have been raised by his providential arrangements, and the offices they administer but offices which have been conferred upon them by his supreme agency, regulated according to his sovereign pleasure? "*There is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south: but God is the Judge: he putteth down one and setteth up another. Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his; he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding.*"* What a dignity does this consideration confer on the whole order of political rulers who possess the good qualities their office requires! It constitutes them—not common artists, with whom they have been, very absurdly, compared, but—the temporary vicegerents on earth of the Supreme Sovereign from whom they hold their commissions. It presents them in the high attitude, the exalted character, the honourable office of his moral deputies. It invests them with a portion of that legislative and executive authority of which He is the grand source, and secures them a measure of that esteem, veneration, and reverence to which he has, from all his rational subjects, an inalienable claim. Hence the dignified appellations by which they are distinguished in the scriptures,—"*gods*,"

* Rom. xiii. i. Psalm lxxv. 6, 7. Dan. ii. 20, 21.

"*children of the Most High,*" "*ministers of God, attending continually on this very thing.*"* Nor should they forget the solemn responsibility they are under, from the peculiar relation in which they stand to the Deity. The official representatives of an earthly king, in the various provinces of his empire, feel the importance of the trust which they have received from him, and the weight of the responsibility they are under, during the whole period they act in its administration. Shall political rulers, then, who are the honoured representatives of the Universal Potentate in the several countries over which they reign, think lightly of the great trust they manage, and the solemn account they must render? Does it become them, in any case, to prefer their own mercenary pleasures to the general welfare—their own private views to the explicit laws of revelation—and the friendship of cotemporary despots in other kingdoms to the approbation of the Supreme Judge in the heavens? Surely, when they remember that He, whose public servants they are, is a Master, who makes the heavens his palace, the clouds his chariot, the angels his retinue, and the thunder his voice,—when they recollect his immaculate purity, his unerring wisdom, his perfect acquaintance with all their deeds, however various the springs from which they have sprung, and however complicated the machinery employed for their execution,—when they figure to themselves the day of righteous retribution, "when tyrannical princes shall appear in chains, licentious

* Psalm lxxxii. 6. Rom. xiii. 6.

nobles in disgrace, unjust magistrates in the custody of almighty justice, and public shame be the promotion of those who have here worn honours of which they were not worthy," surely they should feel, even in the giddiest moments of prosperity, and on the loftiest heights of power, that they fill situations of the greatest responsibility, as well as of the highest honour—that they owe an account of all their official acts to the Supreme Judge, no less than to their numerous constituents—and that they will be "*judged out of those things which are written in the books, according to their works,*"* ere they are awarded their irreversible destiny in the eternal world.

II. Having thus enumerated the principal senses in which political government originates in the divine will, I would next specify those in which it flows, with evident justice, from the mind of human society. Though it is a divine institution, appointed in the sacred writings, and founded on moral principles originally inherent in the human constitution, mankind are not, in the formation of it, reduced to mere instruments, that act under physical influence, according to the laws of material bodies. They are left rational, moral, accountable agents, qualified to arrange, with judicious deliberation, the varied machinery of civil polity, and allowed to enjoy, with intelligent gratitude, the numerous advantages of the social union. In short, they are the origin of government, under the Supreme Being, in the three following senses:

* Rev. xx. 12, "*I saw the dead, small and* great *stand before God.*"

1. *It is their inalienable right to dictate the constitution, according to which they shall be governed.* That every community should have a political constitution including the fundamental laws on which they wish their political affairs managed, is a first principle which few, in the present age, will question. Who, of the smallest sagacity, or of ordinary patriotism, would recommend, as a substitute for this, the mere will of the first magistrate? No doubt, were he a being of unerring intellect, of unsullied rectitude, of glowing benevolence, unmixed with selfish views—of unblemished integrity, unassailable by sinister motives—then no *injury* could accrue to their *interests*, whatever *encroachments* might take place on their *rights*, from his assumption of absolute authority. Endowed with such pre-eminent qualities, he should be the immaculate vicegerent of the Deity, the infallible legate of the skies, dictating laws of eternal equity, and pursuing measures of unexampled patriotism. But, when we remember, that he possesses the same imperfections that tarnish the character of other men—that he possesses the same seeds of moral pravity and of wrong judgment in his mind—that he has the same weaknesses when assailed by strong passions within, or insidious allurements without—and that the very elevation to which he has been raised tends to diminish his sympathy for the lower orders, to enhance his selfish feelings, to repress his generous emotions, and to multiply his luxurious indulgencies, even beyond the limits of his pecuniary allowances,—we must see the gross *impolicy* of making his mind, however cultivated, the law of his par-

ticular administration. Policy, justice, experience, and revelation equally demand that there be fixed laws sufficient to secure the citizens against his irregular inclinations,—strong barriers adequate to defend them from the iniquitous infringements of which he is so apt to become guilty.*

Now, by whom ought this important instrument to be made, except the community themselves who are to be ruled, in their greatest interests, according to its provisions? No doubt, had Deity, the Supreme Legislator, sent down from heaven a political charter adapted to the exigencies of all countries,—a charter prescribing a particular form of government, distributing the electoral franchise, fixing the number of representatives proper for a given population, and settling all the leading articles required in a regular government,—such a charter would have been obligatory on all nations to whom it was revealed, with suitable proofs of its divine origin. The offspring of infinite intelligence and boundless benevolence, no less than of legitimate authority, it would have deserved from them a grateful reception, a luminous exposition, and a faithful execution. If not engraven on tables of stone by the finger of God, it would have merited being recorded in letters of gold

* "I would have it in the power of the *people*, who gave him the authority over themselves, *to prescribe to him a model of his government*, and that the king may make use of that justice which the people gave him over themselves. No man will willingly lay bonds and fetters on himself. And I know not, whether it be better to leave a man without bonds, or to fetter him with slight bonds; because he may rid himself thereof when he pleases."—Buchanan, De Jure Regni, 25.

by human artists, and suspended, in the most prominent positions, in the palaces of kings and the halls of legislators, as well as in the dwellings of humbler citizens. But, it is almost needless to say, the Scriptures do not contain even the outlines of such a charter. They merely unfold the general principles of civil polity, the primary elements of political science, the original materials out of which political builders may construct such social edifices as shall defend the natural rights of mankind, and resist the dreadful convulsions that now level with the dust the worn-out fabrics of tyranny. It remains, therefore, the unalienable right of the people themselves, composing various ranks, to determine the articles of their constitution, according to the best views of their own judgment. Who shall deprive them of this right, under any pretexts that do not deserve either our contempt or our indignation? If either the chief magistrate, or the hereditary nobles, or a foreign cabinet, arrogate this prerogative, we would ask them to show their authority warranting such an extraordinary proceeding. Unless they can produce either a written warrant from the community whose laws they would enact, or an authentic commission from the Divinity whose sovereignty they would assume, we must call them, without ceremony, *usurpers*, whose impertinent encroachments are to be opposed by strenuous remonstrances in the first instance, and by armed resistance as a last resource if necessary. No matter however excellent the charter offered by either of these parties,—no matter how replete with the great principles of wisdom, justice, and humani-

ty,—no matter how free from the defects, the abuses, and the absurdities of existing institutions,—no matter what number of civilians have attested its unrivalled superiority, and recommended its immediate adoption; since it has not originated in the will of the community themselves, whose province it is to dictate their own laws, it is an *imposition* against which they should protest in "sentences of thunder," as they would preserve their own political rights from a criminal invasion, and surrounding nations from a pernicious precedent.

Is it alleged that nearly all communities, in their present state of ignorance, are very ill qualified to act the important part we have now assigned them? We would repel the allegation by various remarks. Consider, *first*, that though they were much more ignorant about the theory of government than they are, this circumstance does not, in strict justice, divest them of their essential rights and subject them to political slavery. Never can they be doomed to this wretched condition by any human authority, till they have committed against society some offence worthy of such punishment; and if their ignorance is to be construed into a crime, it is one of which the greater share is evidently attributable to their rulers who have withheld from them the means of knowledge, by discouraging schools for elementary education, and imposing taxes on political journals. Consider *next*, that this alleged disqualification can never be removed, till they enjoy political freedom. Who ever heard of nations, subjected to the mere will of despots, acquiring a knowledge of political truths? Such rulers

take precious care to extinguish the first rays of political intelligence, to close the lips of the liberal clergy, to disperse the inquisitive students by shutting up the universities, and to prevent the spread of political views over their benighted kingdoms by the vigilant exclusion of foreign journals. Is it under *such* men that communities are to unlearn their narrow prejudices, to correct their absurd usages, to imbibe salutary views and generous sentiments?" Then may we expect to hear, ere long, that the *favoured* slaves who have crouched, for centuries, beneath the sceptres of Brandenburgh and Braganza,—especially, that the *happy* negroes in our colonies who have been placed in such an excellent school, under most humane teachers for several ages, have burst upon the world in a state of admirable qualification for the exercise of their political rights, and the enactment of political systems!! But, it is all a miserable delusion, worthy of the ancient fool who resolved not to go into the water, till he had learned to swim, or of the poor maniac who was determined never to open his eyes out of his cell, till he had accustomed them to the full blaze of the sun. "When a prisoner first leaves his cell, he cannot bear the light of day; he is unable to discriminate colours or recognise faces. But the remedy is, not to remand him to his dungeon, but to accustom him to the rays of the sun. The blaze of truth and liberty may at first dazzle and bewilder nations which have become half blind in the house of bondage. But let them gaze on, and they will soon be able to bear it. In a few years men learn to reason. The extreme vio-

lence of opinions subsides. Hostile theories correct each other. The scattered elements of truth cease to conflict and begin to coalesce; and at length a system of justice and order is educed out of the chaos." *

2. *It is equally the inalienable right of the people to make choice of their rulers.* No constitution of civil polity, with whatever judgment arranged, can effect its objects unless it is executed by suitable officers. Whatever be the parts into which it has been divided, whatever the legislative assemblies it creates, whatever the executive authorities it prescribes, and whatever the judicial courts it establishes, individuals must be chosen to fulfil the functions formed in the political body, to regulate the machinery put up in the social building.

Now, by whom ought the servants of the state to be chosen? There seem to be only three modes in which they can acquire power over the community whose affairs they would manage, *divine right, usurpation,* and *popular election.* Those who allege *divine right* as the origin of their authority, should produce a written commission from the hand of the Deity, or perform miracles, as sufficient evidence that they have been appointed by him to the offices which they fill. Would they cure their subjects of inveterate disorders, without the intervention of medical skill,—would they drive away from their soil invading hosts, without having recourse to the efforts of military troops,—would they impart the gift of fo-

* Edinburgh Review, No. lxxxiii. 332, 333.

reign tongues to a company of pious missionaries, without requiring them to employ the mental labour hitherto necessary in the acquisition of languages,—would they perform these or similar miracles, then might we believe, that they held their offices by a grant so sacred as their arrogant pretensions imply. But it is unnecessary, at this time of day, to argue against an illiberal dogma which intelligent men of all parties have traced to the days of darkness and of ignorance, superstition, and credulity, and agreed, with mutual congratulations, to cast into the tomb of oblivion even without an inscription.—No less untenable is the title founded on *usurpation*. It matters not what valuable services they have previously rendered to the state, what beneficial treaties they have negotiated by their diplomatic cunning—what glorious victories they have won by their military tactics,—what salutary reforms they have wrought in domestic jurisprudence by their legal skill, applied under the direction of public spirit, they have no moral claim to the offices they occupy. Their previous celebrity rather increases the turpitude of their present success; and the proud elevation which they have reached, after trampling down, with their own feet, the sacred rights which they had defended from those of others, can never be cleared of those dark clouds and dangerous storms which must ever surround the thrones of successful usurpers. We are thus brought to the *third* way in which political power is acquired,—*the choice of the community*, as the only way that is compatible either with the just

rights of citizens, or the moral dignity and permanent safety of rulers.

Were any additional proof necessary, I might produce the fact, that the Israelites, even under their theocracy, elected their own rulers. This right was recognised, at a very early period, announced in explicit terms, and regulated by express prescriptions, describing both the qualifications and the duties of those they should place over them, by their free choice. "*Take you,*" said the messenger of heaven, "*wise men, and understanding, and known among your tribes, and I will make them rulers over you.*"* "*Thou shalt in any wise set him king over thee whom the Lord thy God shall choose; one from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee: thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, who is not thy brother.*"† "This law," says Dr. M'Leod, "for the election of rulers, and for trial of their conduct, implies the *right* of election, and removal from office. The practice illustrates the law. We read, it is true, of kings designated to office by immediate revelation. But the executive officers of Judah and Israel, although called kings, were placed under a law, and liable to deposition on account of mal-administration. Even when nominated by the Lord, they were still recognised as the representatives or agents of the commonwealth, and subject to removal from office by the community whensoever they abused their trust. When Saul was placed upon the throne, the institution of the monarchy, and the ac-

* Deut. i. 13. † Deut. xvii. 15.

tual election of the incumbent, were the acts of the people of Israel, although the Lord pointed out the man.* David, Solomon, and Rehoboam, Uzziah and Josiah, received the kingdom by consent of the community. All the kings of Israel and Judah were subject to the constitution and the law; obliged to act with the advice of the *Sanhedrim*, the great council of elders; to preserve, in their rights, the lesser Sanhedrims of the several cities, all of which were *regularly elected to office:* and in default, these kings were punished of the Lord by divine judgments, and of the people by deposition, as in the case of Uzziah, or by death, as in that of his father Amaziah king of Judah."†

With regard to the first magistrate of a kingdom, whether he should be *elective* or *hereditary*, is a question which has been discussed, with different opinions, even by friends of popular rights. It must be admitted, that an *elective* monarchy has usually been an occasion of disgraceful broils,—of unprincipled intrigues—of sanguinary contests. Often has the demise of one occupant kindled the flames of civil war, which rival factions have fanned for their selfish purposes, which national interests have suffered for successive years, and which nought could quench but torrents of blood, shed with a barbarous ferocity never equalled in warfare with foreign enemies. Unquestionably making the crown hereditary does prevent these criminal, disgraceful, and pernicious proceedings; and were it practicable to

* 1 Sam. x. 17—24. † Scriptural View, &c. 63, 64, 65.

render wisdom, benevolence, and other regal qualifications also hereditary, no man, of sane mind and good feeling, would object to such a *pacific* arrangement. But looking at the essential rights of mankind—remembering the primary truth which has, at length, gone forth almost to the utmost limits of the civilized world, *that the people alone can confer legitimate power*, we must hold that it is their exclusive prerogative to make choice, in some form, even of their chief ruler. Without their consent expressed or implied, he can have no valid title to interfere in their political concerns, demand their voluntary obedience, or appropriate the royal revenues. Happily this great truth has been recognised, in this country,* by one of the greatest events of

* Other countries have, since, opened their gates to the same truth which is destined to travel over the globe. Sweden called to the throne Bernadotte while the lineal heir was living. France, having expelled the last of the Bourbons, on account of his perfidy, tyranny, and incurable bigotry, has bestowed the crown on the object of its almost unanimous choice—the Duke of Orleans. Belgium, too, having cashiered a master who was forced upon her by foreign bayonets, has, the other day, placed in the chair to which she had invited him, a foreign prince. What other nation shall next do homage to this great principle, we are unable, with certainty, to foretell. But, assuredly, when we see German and Italian princes flying from their principalities before a storm of popular indignation which their arbitrary acts have provoked,—when we behold the "great powers" on the Continent propping up their tottering thrones by the efforts of armed mercenaries, on whose allegiance, in the approaching crisis, they place but a trembling reliance,—above all, when we behold the flame of liberty, after being long repressed, bursting forth in their capitals, and spreading over their provinces with a strength which they shall easily extinguish when they shall have drained the majestic rivers that roll along in their kingdoms, the Po, the Rhine, the Vistula, and the Danube, we cannot doubt but that the people, in many lands, are des-

which it has been the theatre—the Revolution of 1688. That event, affirms Sir James Mackintosh, "established, by a memorable precedent, the right of the people of England to revoke abused power, to frame the government, and bestow the crown. There was a time indeed, when some wretched followers of Filmer and Blackwood lifted their heads in opposition. But more than half a century has withdrawn them from public contempt, to the amnesty and oblivion which their innoxious stupidity had purchased. It is futile to urge, that the convention deviated only *slenderly* from the order of succession. The deviation was, indeed, slight; but it destroyed the principle, and established their *right* to deviate—the point at issue. The *choice* was, like every other choice, guided by views of policy and prudence, but it was a choice still."*

Is it alleged that the exercise of this right in choosing representatives has, in many cases, given rise to disgraceful scenes, in this country? I must admit the humiliating truth. What patriot does not blush on hearing of British citizens rioting, for days and nights in succession, in all sorts of dissipation and gluttony, venality and perjury, disgusting ribaldry, and pernicious turbulence? It would seem that they had resolved, with general consent, to set aside the ordinary restraints of prudence, decorum,

tined, ere long, to acquire that influence in the appointment of their rulers to which they are justly entitled, and from which, when regulated by proper principles, the happiest effects must accrue in all the departments of education and religion, literature and science, agriculture, trade, and commerce.

* Vindiciæ Gallicæ, 294, 297, 298.

and law,—to give unbridled licence to the worst propensities,—and to vie with one another in the ignoble gratifications of unbounded sensuality and mischievous rioting. But who, I ask, must we blame for all these outrages so criminal, so disgraceful, and so hurtful? Must we not blame the *electors* themselves, who, in using an important right, give way to such gross irregularities? Must we not blame the *candidates* who distribute, through various channels, those bribes that procure all the means of extravagant indulgence, and who, by a well-known legal quibble, falsely swear before Parliament, that they have procured their return by no undue influence? Must we not blame the *Legislature* who have neglected to use the powers with which they are armed for correcting such disorderly proceedings, and punishing such notorious delinquents? Yes, let blame undiminished descend in those quarters where the criminality has been committed; but let us vindicate against the abuses of all recreant freemen who become *slaves* to their own base passions, *the inestimable right itself*, which ought ever to have been associated with conduct at once virtuous, manly, and honourable, and which is inseparably connected with the future advancement of national liberty, prosperity, and happiness.

3. *It is also their inalienable right to revise, amend, and improve the political system under which they live.* That this political system needs improvement, even in its purest state, is a position which none having any pretensions to reason, information, and candour, can question. Doubtless, had it been brought

to such perfection that any alteration would, necessarily, make it worse, then, unquestionably, ought it to be kept in its present condition. It were presumptuous folly ever to think of making the least improvement on a system that has already arrived at absolute perfection, as it would be unreasonable arrogance to attempt giving sweeter fragrance to the violet, purer hues to the rose, and greater radiance to the sun. But, if such perfection cannot be proved to belong to the system, its claim to immutability is groundless. If defects, originating in less enlightened times, still attach to it,—if enactments injurious to natural rights, still disfigure it,—if improvements, suggested by the progress of human knowledge and conducive to the advancement of national interests are attainable, why leave it in that imperfect state into which it was brought by those who did not enjoy *our* superior advantages, and were not under *our* heavy responsibility. But, I must enter a little more minutely into this subject, on which it is mortifying to observe the strange notions still prevalent in some quarters.

Have the community, then, *a right* to make alterations in the system of government which they have once established? Some courtly writers, among whom Burke occupies a distinguished rank, have averred, that they have no such right,—that "*the constitution of a country being once settled upon some compact, tacit or expressed, there is no power existing of force to alter it without the breach of the covenant.*" * Such an opinion evidently involves con-

* Howard's Beauties of Literature, vol. v. p. 52.

clusions the most absurd, and consequences the most dangerous. Supposing that a former generation, living four centuries ago, *had* given away to the rulers the right of altering their political system, I cannot see on what principle a deed so palpably *unjust* can be binding on *us* their successors. They were at liberty, certainly, to give away, in any shape they chose, whatever belonged to themselves,—their private property, if their chivalrous loyalty required, —their personal liberty, if their abject servility allowed. But to barter for any supposed advantages *our* rights, among which that of improving our government holds an important place, would have been going beyond their legitimate powers, in a measure altogether intolerable. They could have no warrant to encroach on privileges which are *our* imprescriptible birth-right, *our* inalienable possession, by the grant of our gracious Creator. Far less could they have been justified, in an age when feudal darkness brooded over the land, and debasing superstition trammelled the mind, to dictate to us a system in which we were never to supply obvious defects, and remove injurious blemishes, without becoming liable to "penal censure." But, I deny that our ancestors *were* guilty of making such an iniquitous surrender of our rights. May I not ask, where is it recorded? In what section of the Magna Charta is it engrossed? In what volume of the huge mass of statutes that have been passed since the institution of Parliaments, and that would now form about a thousand *folios*, is it to be found? The truth is, the whole theory of a social compact in which the go-

vernment are alleged to have abandoned, in a former age, to their governors certain rights for certain advantages, is a mere fiction, unsupported by a single authentic document,—impracticable by the primitive founders of nations in their rude condition,—and furnishing an impassable barrier to the mitigation even of the worst despotism that ever trod down the interests of the most degraded community. It is a fiction which never could have had so many supporters in this country, had not the greatest of philosophers,* at a time when the question had been little discussed, given it the support of his powerful mind, and the sanction of his illustrious name. Accordingly, by all sensible politicians, it is now discarded as a gratuitous assumption, as a pernicious theory; and communities are now allowed to have an inalienable right inherent in them, in all ages, to make such alterations in their constitution as are suggested, for their greater benefit, by the growing enlightenment of the human mind, and the increasing spread of disinterested benevolence.†

Again, have a community the *requisite ability* to

* Locke. See his Works, vol. v. pp. 394–411. For the satisfactory refutation of his theory, consult Paley's Works, pp. 102, 103, 104; Dwight's Theology, vol. iv. pp. 129–132; Brown's Lectures on the Philosophy of the Human Mind, vol. iv. pp. 366–382.

† "Men are destined to improve on their lot, and on their first inventions, and no more acquiesce in the first defective forms of society, than they do in the first rudiments of other accommodation, or in the first practice of any mechanical art. We state the condition of rude society as the material on which the genius of man is to work, not as a finished production with which he is for ever to remain contented."—*Principles of Moral and Political Science, by Adam Ferguson, LL.D.* Vol. I. pp. 257, 258.

effect improvements in their system of government? That they are entirely secured against the possibility of errors, on a subject involving so many difficult questions, and shrouded with a veil of such awful mystery, it were unreasonable to expect from fallible beings, however enlightened, conscientious, and virtuous. Still, we consider them qualified to detect many abuses that have hitherto been spared, to suggest many reforms that have always been overlooked, and even to defend many *first principles* of great value, of which some individuals high in office betray lamentable ignorance. When we remember, that they consist of various ranks, among whom a stream of political intelligence has been circulating through numerous channels,—that they can boast numerous individuals whose enlightened views in political science contrast sadly with the antiquated forms and partial statutes still retained in the constitution,—and that the most useful reforms which have been accomplished in past ages have both originated in their judicious suggestions, and succeeded under their peculiar auspices, we must admit, that they are not without the ability necessary to the important task in question. At all events, that prince would be presumptuous indeed, who should imagine, that he is still better qualified to reform the existing system. A more injudicious, inappropriate, and inefficient reformer, it is to be feared, could not be found. When we recollect, that princes have usually many arbitrary maxims infused into their minds by servile courtiers—that they usually place undue confidence in their own judgments,

from the deference paid even to their errors,—and that they are deeply interested in the support of those evils which afford gratification to their selfish passions, ambition, avarice, pride, we must deprecate their interference, on the ground of mental competency, as well as on that of constitutional order. "It is upon this account," says Dr. Smith, "that of all political speculators, sovereign princes are by far the most dangerous. This arrogance is perfectly familiar to them. They entertain no doubt of the immense superiority of their own judgment. When such imperial and royal reformers, therefore, condescend to contemplate the constitution of the country which is committed to their government, they seldom see any thing *so* wrong in it as the obstructions, which it may sometimes oppose, to the execution of their own will. They hold in contempt the divine maxim of Plato, and consider the state as made for themselves, not themselves for the state. The great object of their reformation, therefore, is to remove those obstructions,—to reduce the authority of the nobility,—to take away the privileges of cities and provinces, and to render both the greatest individuals, and the greatest orders of the state, as incapable of *opposing their commands*, as the weakest and most insignificant."*

Farther; would a community promote *the public interests*, by improving their political system? Unquestionably they would. No doubt, *partial* interests—the great evil into which governments have so

* Theory of Moral Sentiments, vol. ii. 105.

frequently fallen—would be secured, with the greatest success, by retaining, as objects of fond veneration, all existing *defects*. It is under *their* protection that *individuals* can secure pensions to which they have no title founded in previous services,—that *corporations* can engross privileges to which they possess no better claim in moral equity than the other inhabitants who are excluded,—and that *particular orders* can appropriate to members of their own families the principal offices, civil, military, naval, and clerical, without respect either to mental endowments, or to professional acquirements. But, we have yet to learn, that such partial interests *deserve* the fostering care and the continued support of government. We prefer the broad principle that the *public good*, or, in other words, the greatest possible happiness of the greatest possible number, is the legitimate object at which government should aim. Now this object cannot be gained, without removing the impolitic laws that have been passed by unwise legislators, and supplying the glaring defects which have been spared by interested courtiers. "It is surely neither enthusiasm nor absurdity to affirm," says Professor Stewart, "that governments are more or less perfect, in proportion to the greater or smaller number of individuals to whom they afford the means of cultivating their intellectual and moral powers, and whom they admit to live together on a liberal footing of equality. The perfection of political wisdom does not consist in an indiscriminate zeal against reformers, but in a gradual and prudent accommodation of established institutions to the varying opinions, manners, and cir-

cumstances of mankind. I would willingly believe, that the final effects resulting from this spirit of reformation, cannot fail to be favourable to human happiness; and there are some peculiarities in the present condition of mankind, which appear to me to justify more sanguine hopes upon the subject, than it would have been reasonable for a philosopher to indulge at any former period. The most important, perhaps, is, that the same events which have contributed to loosen the foundations of the ancient fabrics of despotism have made it practicable, in a much greater degree than it ever was formerly, to reduce the principles of legislation to a science, and to anticipate the probable course of popular opinions. It is easy for the statesman to form to himself a distinct and steady idea of the ultimate objects at which a wise legislator ought to aim, and to foresee that modification of the social order, to which human affairs have, of themselves, a tendency to approach; and, therefore, his practical sagacity and address are limited to the care of accomplishing the important ends which he has in view, as effectually and as rapidly as is consistent with the quiet of individuals, and with the rights arising from actual establishments."*

Having thus shown in what respects government originates in the will of Deity, and in what respects it flows from the will of society, I would now, before concluding this section, advert to several opinions, on this subject, that require either unqualified rejection or considerable limitation.

* Elements, vol. i. 218, 219, 250, 257.

1. Let us guard against the dangerous dogma, *the divine right of kings.* Were this expression employed to signify, merely, that good kings have derived their power from the original fountain of all existence, through the medium of popular consent, no reasonable objection could be taken. Is not *this* a truth suggested by the soundest argumentation, confirmed by the plainest declarations of scripture, and gratifying to the primary feelings of religion in every pious bosom? But a very different signification has been annexed to that expression; an expression scarce ever uttered now, in this country, except with supreme contempt, or unmingled abhorrence. It signifies that all rulers, whatever the moral character they bear, and whatever the public policy they pursue, hold their crowns, directly, from God, independently of the community. Let them be the greatest oppressors that ever seized the goods, or violated the liberties, or shed the blood of their unfortunate subjects; let them be notorious for atrocious cruelties in their administrations, and for debasing vices in their courts; let the bitterest execrations from the lips of an indignant people light upon their heads for their perfidy, and their pusillanimity, their inhuman massacres and unprincipled spoliations, yet, according to this dogma, they are the approved servants of Deity by immediate delegation, which none must, under the most dreadful penalties, either question, ridicule, or oppose. Now, we are free to do all the three, on fitting occasions, without being conscious of presumptuous disrespect towards royalty placed on a proper foundation, and without regarding the trained syco-

phants who flatter those continental sovereigns who rest their title to crowns on an immediate grant from heaven, rather than on the implied acquiescence of their subjects.

Such an arrogant claim seems pregnant with the *grossest impiety*. It attributes to God moral evil in some of its most frightful forms. All the scandalous delinquencies of which despots are guilty, in their tyrannical edicts, all their sanguinary atrocities, all their barbarous massacres, are *his* deeds. *Can* we tolerate, for a single moment, such an idea in our minds? *Can* we believe, on any grounds, that a Being of immaculate purity and infinite benevolence, gives them a licence to riot in the grossest wickedness, and in the greatest cruelties? Is it possible, that he sanctions, with his approbation, the measures they take for trampling down political liberty, extirpating true religion, and exterminating the purest patriots in their enslaved kingdoms? As well may it be pretended in the physical world, that the turbid waters which fill the air with noxious exhalations spring immediately from the living fountain, or that the icy mountains which float on the polar seas descend directly from the burning sun.

The impiety of this dogma, however, is not greater than its *irrationality*. It reduces the whole community to the most humiliating condition. Wretched vassals, they exist only under the arbitrary sway, and only for the unrestricted pleasure, of their royal masters. Degraded bondsmen, they are almost on a level with the brutes, who are fed with nutritious food, and protected from external injury, only for the profit of their owners. Their indefeasible rights are

trampled in the dust, lest they should obstruct the exercise of royal prerogatives; and their social privileges given to the winds, lest they should mar the gratification of royal propensities. But I will not insult the common sense, the moral feeling, of my readers, by the farther refutation of an absurdity which has, happily, been consigned to perpetual oblivion, in this free country. "That God, the equal God of all mankind, has not formed us to be the slaves of any individual; and in furnishing our minds with so many principles, that insure our progress in less important sciences, has not abandoned us, in the most important of all, to the selfishness of a power, which may prefer the present misery of its own despotic sway to all that can be offered for its reformation,—I surely need not now attempt to prove to you. On the right divine of authority, whatever vague allusions to it we may sometimes find in courtly flatterers of the day, we have no writers *now* who require to be confuted. The argument for that right, which is in logic little better than any other argument for the right divine of any thing that exists,—whether good or evil merely as existing,—for the prevalent system of manners, virtuous or vicious,—or even, as has been truly said, for the right divine of a wide-spread fever, or any other pestilence, is as wretched in its moral consequences as it is ridiculous in logic."*

2. Let us guard against that kindred error,—*that it belongs to the prerogative of kings to grant constitutions to their subjects.* Such a maxim, though repug-

* Brown's Lectures, vol. iv. pp. 367, 368.

nant to the natural rights of man, and productive of the worst effects on society, has many advocates, even in the present day, among courtly sycophants. It is put forth with an affectation of liberality in several courts that have long nourished arbitrary sentiments with unreflecting veneration; and, on this ground, are various princes on the continent proposing, at the present moment, to grant charters to their enslaved subjects, from whom, smarting under the recollection of past wrongs, they dread, in these eventful times, a dreadful retribution. The measure itself is good; but the principle from which it flows is arbitrary, impolitic, and dangerous. However desirable to an oppressed people must be almost any system of social polity which their rulers may bestow; and however preferable the government of fixed laws reduced to writing, to that of fluctuating maxims, changing with every breeze of royal displeasure; yet ought they to protest against even the beneficial assumption of a principle which contains the very essence of despotic power.

Consider, first, that this is an *insolent usurpation* of an important right belonging exclusively to the community. What should be thought of servants who would set their judgments above that of their employer, dictate their own orders instead of receiving them from him, and prefer their own selfish ends to his peculiar interests? Not less arrogant are those kings, who lift up their heads above the people, as if they were the original fountain of law; who determine, in the proud exercise of their unlimited pleasure, what political systems the millions crouching beneath their sceptres shall obtain; and who ima-

gine, in the unbounded vanity of their flattered minds, they have conferred a boon meriting the highest gratitude, when they have given even the most defective charter. It is time, surely, that they knew the just limits of their peculiar province, instead of wandering in the boundless fields of absolute sovereignty.* Let *communities*, for whose good government has been instituted by our gracious Creator, and by whose pecuniary sacrifices rulers are supported in the external splendour with which they are surrounded, say, respectfully, yet firmly, that it is *their right* to fix, by their proper representatives, the provisions of their political constitution, unmodified by the dictates of royal caprice, and the frowns of despotic authority.

Consider, farther, that *a king is disqualified*, by the very office he fills, for giving a liberal constitution. Such a constitution is designed to set limits to his private views and his selfish passions—to erect bulwarks which shall prevent him from encroaching on the political rights and social privileges of the nation. It is excellent in proportion as it restricts the exercise of his prerogative without weakening the energy of his administration, and confines him to fixed courses by general laws, without curbing

* It is to the honour of England that, without unduly limiting the royal prerogative, she has, many centuries ago, refused to the king such sovereign power. "*Sovereign power*," says the illustrious Coke, "is no parliamentary word. Magna charta and all our great statutes are absolute, without any saving of sovereign power. Let us take heed what we yield unto. Magna charta is such a fellow that he will have no sovereign." See Inquiry into the Rise and Growth of the Royal Prerogative in England. By John Allen.

his generous emotions by undue restrictions. But, what king can be expected to grant *such* a constitution? Retaining the ordinary imperfections of humanity in his exalted station, he will rather impose as few restrictions as possible on his selfish inclinations, and grant as little liberty as possible to his clamorous subjects. The charter emanating from his mind will be a plausible illusion rather than a grand reality—a temporary palliation rather than a successful remedy. It will contain reservations which shall counteract its most salutary enactments, ambiguities upon which any construction agreeable to the royal wishes may be put, and a hundred *loopholes* through which bloody edicts, conceived in restless ambition, and concocted by servile minions, may burst, at any future period, on the eyes of an astonished community. It is the height of imprudence to leave to *him* the task of drawing up the charter by which they wish to be governed. As they value their political liberties apart from iniquitous infringements, they should take the matter into their own hands, by delegating intelligent patriots who would, in the ablest manner, arrange the articles of a constitution subservient to the rights of the whole community, and worthy the enlightenment of the present age.

3. Nor should we receive, without limitation, the modern notion now blazoned in various languages,—*the sovereignty of the people.* Were this expression always used to denote these political axioms—that the people have a right to fix the political system under which they shall live, to choose the political

rulers to whom they shall submit, and to make what alteration they please in their scheme of government, independently of the will of their first magistrate,—I should hail its progress with unmingled approbation. These are the imprescriptible rights of society, the distinctive attributes of humanity, the fundamental principles of jurisprudence. Long may they be held in due admiration, and enjoyed with becoming gratitude. Rapidly may they circulate through a thousand channels unobstructed by injurious restrictions, and enter into innumerable minds unincumbered by ancient prejudices. Triumphantly may they march over all countries now shaking with political convulsions, till the dismal clouds of superstition have passed away before the spreading light of revelation, and the decayed structures of despotism have made way for the erection of constitutional governments. But, is it not evident to every person of ordinary reflection, that that expression is often used in a *wider sense* that is altogether inadmissible? Does it not often signify a sovereignty uncontrolled by the precepts of scriptural morality, and uninfluenced by the prospects of future responsibility? It is painful to observe the nations who have recovered this political *sovereignty*, after ages of debasing slavery, arranging their new systems of polity, with the same proud irreligious independence we might expect them to manifest, if there were no God to acknowledge, no Bible to obey, and no judgment-seat to fear.

Now this ungodly independence, this licentious sovereignty in the conduct of states, pours contempt

on the *Divine law.* We would not require citizens to bow, with abject submission, to the will of their rulers, or to receive, with unthinking reverence, the usages of antiquity. We would not demand the entire prostration of their reason to the dictates of servile courtiers, or the passive subjection of their consciences to the opinions of sacerdotal hirelings. But we do insist upon it as their "*reasonable service,*" in all stages of their progress towards the highest civilization, that they bow, with profound reverence, and with cordial gratitude, to the *will* of the Supreme Being. Beyond the jurisdiction of his law they cannot fly; and from the tribunal of his justice they cannot escape. Whether they are employed in arranging the civil polities under which they shall live, or in electing the civil officers who shall preside over their public affairs, or in correcting abuses interwoven with the systems which have descended to them from a long line of illustrious ancestors, they are bound, by solemn obligations, to follow the direction of his revealed law, whatever restraints it imposes on the speculations of their fallible minds and the suggestions of their irregular inclinations.

Besides, this irreligious sovereignty tends to provoke *severe calamities,* from the righteous displeasure of God, on the nations by whom it is indulged. "*For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish: yea, those nations shall be utterly destroyed.*"* How, indeed, *can* those modern nations which

* Isaiah lx. 12.

place their will above that of the moral Governor of the universe, expect to escape threatened judgments? Do they suppose, that He overlooks the insolent contempt with which they treat his moral government, and the rooted abhorrence with which they reject his sacred laws? Do they imagine, they have been left to adopt whatever theories may occur to their erring intellects, and to pursue whatever course may gratify their natural passions? Or, do they flatter themselves, that their deistical politics, of which they have formed such an extravagant estimate, and on which they bestow such exaggerated encomiums, shall elude the inspection of his penetrating eye and resist the force of his punitive justice? To dissipate all such delusions, let them look back on the terrible calamities with which irreligious communities, in past ages, have been punished, by famine and pestilence, by internal dissensions and external quarrels, by domestic tyrants and foreign invaders. Let them recall the nations that have been destroyed, at different times, because they disregarded God in their public affairs, trod under foot his most explicit requirements, and, arrogating to themselves an unprincipled sovereignty, fell into daring irreligion and gross licentiousness. Indeed, when I remember, that God still demands unceasing subjection from them in all their political proceedings, threatens disobedience with a long series of desolating judgments, and exhibits the black roll of physical evils which have been inflicted, in other ages, on communities, for offences similar to those with which they are chargeable, I cannot disguise

my firm conviction that, with all their laudable efforts in correcting evils under which they have too long suffered, they are yet preparing for themselves future calamities by their present contempt of the Almighty, their avowed rejection of his authority, and their idolatrous dependence on distinguished statesmen, who, irrationally and impiously, expect the moral amelioration of our race to the utmost extent, by merely human schemes, in which *his* renovating influence and peculiar honour shall have no place.

4. Equally groundless is that kindred notion, that *any government which is approved by the majority of the inhabitants in a country, is, on that account, the moral institution of Heaven.* I readily admit, if the majority prefer a government founded on the principles of sound morality, and administered by properly qualified rulers, then is it entitled to this high designation. I also admit, though it contains various defects, arising from the unavoidable imperfection of the original framers, and not essential to the very existence of the system which they disfigure, it is entitled to universal support. I will admit farther, that under the very worst government which has the suffrages even of the most corrupt majority, a virtuous minority will conduct themselves in peace towards all other classes with whom they are connected, and seek the removal of present oppressions by those means which enlightened conscience will approve, and the divine law will sanction. But I cannot admit, that *any* government, however immoral its fundamental articles, and however cruel

its prevailing measures, is the ordinance of God, from its having the temporary support of an erring majority.

Consider, first, that the majority in any country is made up of imperfect beings. As individuals, they are prone to error in every field of inquiry and in every department of action. They have no security against the adoption of false views, and of injudicious measures, respecting their personal interests. Must we suppose, then, that the moment they enter on *political ground*, they leave behind them all the seeds of moral corruption, and all the sources of intellectual error? Must we believe, that they acquire greater accuracy of judgment, clearer discernment of truth, higher conscientiousness in conduct, than they had before? No dream could be more unfounded. Yet this *must be* proved to our entire satisfaction, before we can admit, that any magistracy they erect is, necessarily, the positive institution of heaven, and the object of divine approbation. Admit that they carry with them into their political councils the same fallible understandings, natural inclinations, and acquired prejudices by which they are led into errors in all other departments, it inevitably follows, that they are *liable* to adopt political institutions altogether irreconcilable with the dictates of moral rectitude, and to choose political rulers upon whom Deity cannot look with unqualified approbation.

Consider next, that the majority in various countries *have* preferred governments, which it were the *greatest impiety* to trace to the gracious appointment of

God. Look to the degenerate Israelites in Canaan; not unfrequently they chose idolatrous princes, whose investiture with office called forth the divine displeasure,* and whose reign proved a source of sad retribution to their irreligious constituents. Look to the degenerate Scotch under the Stuarts; the majority, during many years, supported a dynasty which was waging a war of extermination against the purest patriots that ever honoured our land, and which was bringing down on itself the severest vengeance that ever alighted on infatuated oppressors. Look to the degraded Spaniards, once a noble race, renowned for deeds still celebrated in story; will any man say, that *their* magistracy, which binds fetters on every mind, immures the best citizens in dungeons, burns the purest believers at the stake, and dooms their fine country to a deeper barbarism than brooded over it three centuries since, is the moral institution of our gracious Creator, an object entitled to *his* positive approbation and *their* conscientious obedience?

Consider, farther, that this doctrine of every government being the ordinance of God that has originated in the choice of a majority, involves the most *dangerous consequences.* "It bestows," says a great and good man, "upon the voice of the people, a power of negativing the will of the Supreme Jehovah; for, whatever he has communicated in his word and stamped with his sacred authority, relative

* "Israel hath cast off the thing that is good; the enemy shall pursue him. They have set up kings, but not by me; they have made princes, and I knew it not." Hosea viii. 3, 4.

to magistracy, ceases to bind, when the voice of a perverse majority carries the deed against it.—It exalts the voice of a majority to the rank of infallibility, and places it upon the same chair with that vile creature who sits in the temple of God.—It entirely sets aside the necessity of all laws, divine and human, about the genius and conditions of the magistracy, and the qualifications of magistrates; for, the doctrine implies that the voice of a majority, simply of itself, and alone, settles the point.—It destroys all fundamental good laws of state; for, none of these, although deriving an inviolable obligation from the moral law, and apparently conducive to the interests of the people, especially in religious matters, can bind longer than the capricious vote of a majority carries an alteration of them: thus, it supposes the people to be possessed of a moral power, at the end of each moment, to vary their constitutions, as humour, passion, corruption, or novelty may direct. Far from being forced, these are the natural consequences of allowing a validity to the voice of a majority, when clearly and materially repugnant to sacred scripture."*

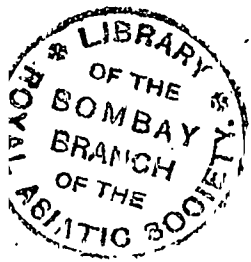
Consider, in one word, that the fluctuating voice of a majority, however large, *cannot change the moral character of things.* If a majority in a country should prefer the *idolatry* to which they have been accustomed from their earliest years, and in which they have still secular interests, does it follow, that idolatry is the appointment of God? If the

* Letter by the Rev. Professor Macmillan, 9, 10.

same majority should prefer the *ancient morality* in which the malevolent passions were extolled by heathen moralists, and from which they might derive impure gratification agreeable to their baser nature, does it follow that that morality is the offspring of Heaven? He must be a bold man who could say so. Why, then, have us believe, that *an unmixed despotism* which crushes the rising energies of a community, blasts the fairest fruits of civilization, and extinguishes the faintest traces of political freedom, is the ordinance of God, from being the choice of a majority? Does *their* choice convert falsehood into truth, vice into virtue, a tyranny that excites unmingled abhorrence into a government that deserves universal approbation? No, surely. "Neither the few nor the many," asserts even Burke, "have a right to act, merely by their will, in any matter connected with duty, trust, engagement, or obligation. And the *votes of a majority of the people*, whatever their infamous flatterers may teach, in order to corrupt their minds, *cannot alter the moral*, any more than they can alter the physical essence of things. To flatter them into a contempt of faith, truth, and justice, is to ruin them; for in these virtues consists their whole safety. To flatter any man, or any part of mankind, in any description, by asserting, that in engagements he or they are free, whilst any other human creature is bound, is ultimately to rest the rule of morality in the pleasure of those who ought to be rigidly submitted to it; to subject the sovereign reason of the world to the caprices of weak and giddy men. But, as no one of us

can dispense with public or private faith, or with any other tie of moral obligation, so neither can any number of us. The number engaged in crimes, instead of turning them into laudable acts, only augments the quantity and intensity of the guilt." *

* Howard's Beauties of Literature, vol. v. 52, 53.



SECTION IV.

THE DISTRIBUTION OF POLITICAL GOVERNMENT.

INTO how many branches government shall be distributed, is a matter left entirely to the discretion of communities themselves. Revelation—the ultimate criterion established for directing them in all their social arrangements—does not tie them down to any particular distribution. While it prescribes the pure spirit they should cultivate, the moral axioms on which they should act, and the principal ends at which they should aim, it leaves them, as to the actual distribution of their political authority, to the dictates of their own natural sagacity, and the teachings of their own collective experience.

At the same time, if I may hazard an opinion somewhat different from that which has prevailed in *actual* establishments, I would say, two branches seem all that are necessary, to secure the ends of the political union—*one to make laws, and another to execute them.* Wisdom and justice are, perhaps, too bold innovations to be yet carried into the construction of governments; but the era approaches, under higher auspices than those of living statesmen, when

communities will see, that some of the boasted institutions that have come down unchallenged from a remote antiquity, and many of the admired usages still retained in the chief courts with pertinacious fondness, are rather contrivances for perplexing the transaction of national affairs, and drawing money from the pockets of unfortunate litigants, than the fruits either of political wisdom or of essential justice. When nature shall have recovered her sway over artifice,—when simplicity shall have banished the endless congeries of irrational technicalities that disfigure the existing systems of politics and jurisprudence, then will it be found that the enactment of good laws, and the punctual execution of them, are the only essential branches of useful government.*

As, however, the object of this publication is the discussion, *not of particular forms, but of general principles,* I shall pass over this irrelevant question, and offer a few general remarks under the three branches which have been recognised, in all past ages, in the government of this country—the *Legislative*—the *Judicial*—and the *Executive.*

I. The Legislative Branch.

The peculiar object of this branch is the providing such laws as are necessary to the ends of the social

* "An organ to collect the public will, and a hand to execute it, are," says Sir James Mackintosh, "the only necessary constituents of the social union. The popular representative forms the first; the executive officer the second."—*Vindiciæ Gallicæ,* 273.

union. No doubt, the supreme Legislator has prescribed, in the Bible, many laws applicable to civil affairs, and obligatory on civil rulers. These laws, were they consulted with the care their distinguished excellence deserves, and with the conscientiousness official responsibility demands, would be found to solve many of the cases that occur in the various departments of the executive magistracy. Judges in their various courts, statesmen in their different offices, and kings even on their thrones, would here find statutes unequalled for native simplicity, intrinsic rectitude, and practical efficacy. Still, it must be acknowledged, that this volume does not contain a body of minute statutes applicable to *all* the multifarious cases that present themselves in the management of nations. Many cases are continually occuring in the important departments of agriculture, trade, commerce, and even justice, for the determination of which new regulations are requisite. Hence the absolute necessity and the legitimate function of a legislature, even in those countries in which the sacred laws of Heaven have obtained the most extensive promulgation, and the most explicit recognition.

The ultimate object of a legislature should be the greatest possible happiness of the community. This is the grand object for which, as we shall show in the next section, the whole system of government has been appointed, to which all its branches should devote their respective powers, and in which all its officers should seek their highest rewards. Especially ought the legislators who have received the noblest

function in the state, who are the honoured substitutes on earth of the supreme Lawgiver, and who hold in their hands the temporal destinies of millions over whom their enactments extend, to have continually in their view this paramount object. Whenever they suffer themselves to overlook this; whenever they prefer either their own private interests, or the selfish advantages of particular bodies,—whenever they sacrifice the general good, in any one national interest, to the temporary gratifications of worldly gain, or the passing shouts of popular applause, they prove unworthy the trust that has been committed to them by unsuspecting constituents, and deserve dismissal, at the earliest possible opportunity, to the private stations from which they never should have risen.*

The legislature, properly constituted, is the supreme power of the state. We are, no doubt, accustomed, without thought, to look up to the executive magistracy as the very highest in political government. Towards *it*, our warmest admiration, our deepest veneration, and our loudest applauses are usually attracted. Royalty seated on a throne, is the most conspicuous object around which others than courtiers have crowded with blind admiration, and to

* "The happiness of the individuals of whom a community is composed, that is, their pleasures and their security, is the end, and the sole end, which the legislator ought to have in view."—*Bentham on Morals and Legislation*, vol. i. 41. "Private ethics teaches how each man may dispose himself to pursue the course most conducive to his own happiness, by means of such motives as offer of themselves: the *art of legislation* teaches how a multitude of men composing a community, may be disposed to pursue that course which, upon the whole, is the most conducive to the happiness of the whole community, by means of motives to be applied by the legislator."—Vol. ii. 255, 256.

which others than priests have offered the incense of servile applause. But, with every disposition to join in the outward offices of respect that are paid, with becoming dignity, to the executive ruler, I must say, there is a higher power in the state to which *even he* owes unreserved subjection in his official character—*the legislative.* This power—comprehending the national will—has given him his public existence, prescribed the duties which he owes to the community, and fixed the bounds beyond which he cannot pass, even in the exercise of accorded prerogative, without treason against the majesty of the state. This is the power, which we ought to view with the deepest interest, watch with the greatest jealousy, censure with the greatest severity when its acts are wrong, and honour with the highest praise when they are right. "*Legislature,*" says Judge Blackstone, "*is the greatest act of superiority that can be exercised* by one being over another. By the sovereign power is meant the making of laws; for wherever that power resides, all others must conform to, and be directed by it, whatever appearance the outward form and administration of the government may put on. For it is, at any time, in the option of the legislature to alter that form and administration by a new edict or rule, and to put the execution of the laws into whatever hands it pleases; and *all the other powers of the state must obey the legislative power in the execution of their several functions, or else the constitution is at an end.*" *

* Commentaries, vol. i. 49, 46.—"Law is the sovereign will to which every part of the community must conform itself. That power, there-

*In prosecuting its important objects, the legislature ought to be guided by the divine law as the supreme standard.** Frequent and loud are the complaints, reiterated in all countries, that legislatures have fallen into the dangerous error of passing unjust decrees, instead of wise laws,—that they have forgotten the dignity of the trust with which they have been honoured,—that they have brought the art of legislation, so worthy of profound respect, into the greatest contempt—that, in short, they have degenerated into the mere instruments of registering ministerial edicts, echoing royal wishes, and supporting partial interests. But, how can such scenes of abject submission and iniquitous blundering be altogether avoided, if they have no fixed criterion by which to guide their public procedure? Does the mariner, who puts his vessel before the winds filling her expanded sails, expect that she will keep her proper course without a rudder? Does the artisan who undertakes to build a house, imagine, that he shall rear a well proportioned structure, creditable to his own character, and satisfactory to his employer, without a plan? No more should legislators imagine, that they can pass good

fore, whether single or combined of many parts, which gives law to the community, must be supreme; and when its will is declared, cannot admit of any control, without a dissolution of the political frame."—*Ferguson's Principles, &c.* vol. ii. 467.

* "Human laws are measures in respect of men whose actions they must direct; howbeit such measures they are as have also their higher rules to be measured by, which rules are two, *the law of God,* and the law of nature; *so that laws human must be made according to the general laws of nature, and without contradiction to any positive law of scripture, otherwise they are ill made.*"—*Hooker's Eccles. Polity,* 79. folio edition.

laws consistent with moral right, and conducive to the public prosperity, without a pious regard to the authority of the Bible.* It is here that the prescriptions of supreme authority, the dictates of unerring wisdom, the emanations of everlasting justice, the vital principles of immutable rectitude, are delivered with a perspicuity that senators never equalled, and an energy that emperors can never suspass. Nor ought they to think that, in the political code of the Jews, there is *nothing* by which they may be assisted. After deducting all those statutes that have been abrogated either by express repeal, or by obvious implication, there remain not a few, which they cannot read with serious attention, without admiring their unequalled excellence, and feeling their abiding obligation.† "There is no ancient people," says a living magistrate, "whose laws have a stronger claim on our attention than the Jews; whether we consider the peculiar circumstances of the people, the high

* "A great multitude of people," says Bentham, "*are continually talking of the law of nature;* and then they go on giving you their sentiments about what is right and what is wrong; and these sentiments, you are to understand, are so many chapters and sections of the law of nature."—Vol. i. 30. "A defect this to which all books must, almost unavoidably, be liable, which take for their subject the *pretended law of nature; an obscure phantom which, in the imaginations of those who go in chace of it,* points sometimes to *manners,* sometimes to *laws,* sometimes to what law *is,* sometimes to what it *ought* to be."—Vol. ii. 264, 265.

† "God himself delivered to the Jews a law, distinct from the law of nature, with respect to their public polity and private right. Some have affirmed, that this law, being enacted by an infallible lawgiver, ought to be copied, in so far as it goes, by every other state; and it must be admitted, that no part of it is contrary to the law of nature; for God, who is the author of both, cannot contradict himself."—*Erskine's Institutes,* vol. i. p. 8.

origin of their laws, or the nature of the enactments themselves. Yet I doubt whether either the spirit or the details of the law of Moses be well understood by many, who are intimately acquainted with the laws of Lycurgus and Solon. That law indeed is contained in all our Bibles. But this is a book which a pious man reads with other views than those of curiosity, and therefore he naturally passes over that part of it, which contains the Jewish code, to arrive at matter in which he has himself a far deeper interest. It is a book which the irreligious never read at all. Hence both are too apt to give way to those designing misrepresentations, which characterise as peculiarly barbarous and uncouth a *code of laws, that both breathes a spirit, and contains enactments, which might put to the blush the legislators of an age far more advanced in civilization and refinement.*"*

The legislature should guard, with peculiar caution, against undue interference. It is one of the most difficult problems in legislation, to determine what should be regulated by specific laws, and what should be left to individual discretion. "Nothing, certainly," says Burke, "can be laid down on the subject that will not admit of exceptions, many permanent, some occasional. But the clearest line of distinction which I could draw, whilst I had my chalk to draw any line, was this; that the state ought to confine itself to what regards the state, or the crea-

* Sacred History, by John Wood, Esq. Sheriff of Peebleshire, vol. i. pp. 184, 185.

tures of the state, namely, the exterior establishment of its religion; its magistracy; its revenue; its military force by sea and land; the corporations that owe their existence to its fiat; in a word, to every thing that is *truly and properly public*, to the public peace, to the public safety, to the public order, to the public prosperity. In its preventive police it ought to be sparing of its efforts, and to employ means, rather few, unfrequent, and strong, than many, and frequent, and of course, as they multiply their puny politic race, and dwindle, small and feeble. Statesmen who know themselves, will, with the dignity which belongs to wisdom, proceed only in this the superior orb and first mover of their duty, steadily, vigilantly, severely, courageously. But as they descend from the state to a province, from a province to a parish, and from a parish to a private house,* they go on accelerated in their fall. They *cannot* do the lower duty; and in proportion as they try *it*, they will certainly fail in the higher."† Nor is minute legislation necessary. There are natural principles in individuals that impel them, without the intervention of any law, to perform many things that are beneficial, and to avoid many things that would be hurtful to society. Indeed, much of the order, industry, enterprise, prosperity, and happiness that many so absurdly ascribe to legislative sagacity, are the natural results of these original principles; and

* Some amusing specimens of this frivolous legislation, furnished by the Scottish Parliament, will be found by the curious reader, on turning up Hutchison's Justice of Peace, vol. ii. pp. 2—6.

† Howard's Beauties of Literature, vol. v. p. 68.

governments have never acted more wisely, than when they have allowed each individual as much liberty as was compatible with the perfect security of the rights of his fellow-citizens, and cleared away those obstacles which their predecessors had opposed to the establishment of that order which society has a tendency to assume. Besides, there are many things, internal principles and outward virtues, as friendship, patriotism, gratitude, beneficence, about which it would be most difficult to legislate. "It is to a sense of this difficulty," affirms the venerable Bentham, "that we may attribute the caution with which most legislators have abstained from subjecting to censure, on the part of the law, such actions as come under the notion of rudeness, or treachery, or ingratitude. The attempt to bring actions of so vague and questionable a nature under the control of law, will argue either a very immature age in which the difficulties which give birth to that danger are not discerned, or a very enlightened age in which they are overcome. The degree in which private ethics stands in need of the assistance of legislation, is different in the three branches of duty above specified—*prudence, probity, beneficence.* Of the rules of moral duty, those which seem to stand least in need of the assistance of legislation, are the rules of prudence. It can only be through some defect on the part of the understanding, if a man be ever deficient in point of duty to himself. It is only with respect to those broad lines of conduct in which all persons, or very large and permanent descriptions of persons, may be in a way to engage, that he can have any pretence

for interfering; and, even here, the propriety of his interference will, in most instances, be very open to dispute."*

It is the special duty of a legislature to improve the laws passed in former ages. That they have a valid *right* to do this, few will presume, in the nineteenth century, to question. They have received from their constituents full power to provide such laws as the public interest requires, and the increasing intelligence of the age recommends. For this purpose, they must revise carefully, impartially, and frequently, the code enacted by their predecessors, that they may be able to remove blemishes, supply defects, accommodate laws made in darker times to the altered circumstances of modern society, and pass additional regulations suggested by important discoveries in the long-neglected field of political economy. "Supreme power, in which the right of legislation is vested, *cannot*," says Erskine, "*restrain itself.* No enactment, therefore, of the legislative power in one age, can fetter that power in any succeeding age: for the legislature of every age, as it has the unlimited power of making laws, must have the same right of *abrogating* or *altering* former laws; otherwise it would cease to be supreme."† Indeed, there are scarcely any in this country who venture to question this right, excepting those who have some sordid interest that depends on the continuance of the present corruptions—some selfish gratification

* Morals and Legislation, vol. ii. pp. 247—251.
† Institutes, vol. i. p. 6.

that should cease were the reasonable alterations carried into effect.—It is, besides, one of their highest *duties* to improve the political institutions which have descended, in the country, from ancient times. Why confine us to the exact order of things that arose, more from accidental circumstances than from political wisdom, in times of comparative ignorance, barbarism, and inexperience? Why reject the new truths that have been elicited by recent investigation, the new lessons taught by accumulated experience in our own land, the new warnings read by repeated convulsions in neighbouring countries? Why allow to remain, in the legal code, enactments evidently unjust, repetitions altogether unnecessary, and gross inconsistencies, the slightest allusion to which calls forth, from liberal minds, unbounded ridicule?* Why, when all other arts are advancing with rapid strides,—painting, sculpture, agriculture, engineering, printing, and when the improvements made in

* Ridiculous inconsistencies are not confined to the statutes passed a few centuries since. So late as the 53d of George III., an act was passed, by which the penalty awarded for a certain offence is to be divided between the king and the informer. Now, what *is* the penalty? Were it a fine, his majesty would find little difficulty in turning it to some account; but it happens to be, *transportation beyond seas for fourteen years!* a novel mode, certainly, of getting rid of any obnoxious monarch who should arise in these realms. Even in the last session, the 1st of William IV., an act amending the laws on forgery, was passed with these two provisions. II. "And be it enacted, That if any person shall forge, or counterfeit * * * any of his majesty's seals appointed by the twenty-fourth article of the Union to be *kept, used, and continued in Scotland, the great seal of Ireland, or the privy seal of Ireland*, every such offender shall be guilty of high treason, and shall suffer death accordingly." Notwithstanding this, the twenty-ninth section says, "And be it enacted, That this act *shall not extend to any offence committed in Scotland or Ireland.*"

these are yielding eminent advantages which our own citizens enjoy with gratitude, and foreigners view with admiration, why should legislation, the sublimest art ever committed to human cultivation, be left in a rude state, little superior to what it was several centuries ago, and denied those gradual improvements of which it is susceptible, from the superior acquaintance attained, in modern times, with the essential principles of the human constitution and the general laws which regulate the course of human affairs?

All the laws enacted by the legislature ought to be made known to the community. Common sense teaches, that we cannot fulfil the duties enjoined, nor avoid the evils prohibited, unless we have a previous knowledge of the statutes. Especially ought those statutes which make arbitrary distinctions, which convert acts, originally indifferent, into positive offences, and which prescribe a variety of civil actions of which we have not the slightest intimation from conscience, judgment, or revelation, to be clearly promulgated. It is monstrous injustice in any government to punish for statutory offences, the acts prohibiting which have never been properly promulgated, or correctly expounded to the people. "That cannot be a rule of life," says Erskine, "which is impossible or *unintelligible*, or of which one cannot be assured, whether it be truly commanded. The thing prescribed as a law must be so distinctly exhibited, as to convey a precise knowledge of its meaning to those who are to be bound by it; and it must be notified to them in such a way, as they

may know it to be the will of their sovereign."* Now, the proper *notification* of laws requires two things. First, it requires that they be *expressed in a style intelligible by ordinary minds.* If they are written in uncouth language, which few can comprehend, and printed in old German characters which few can read, they might as well be locked up in the bosoms in which they have been conceived. It were easy for persons of respectable faculties well cultivated, and of honest intentions faithfully applied, to convey them in language nearly as clear, simple, terse, concise, and exact, as that in which our most approved classics have been composed. What, then, must we think of the barbarous jargon in which they have generally been dressed, the tiresome repetitions by which they have always been extended beyond reasonable limits, and the ambiguous clauses, the real meaning of which, even the lawmakers themselves have sometimes found difficulty in determining? What must we think of those perplexing labyrinths, from which even civilians can hardly extricate themselves by all their laborious studies, and those invisible snares rained down over the country, in which unfortunate litigants are caught, harassed, and plundered? While the English language has been improved to a considerable extent, by the researches of laborious lexicographers, and the compositions of good writers,—while the numerous writings poured forth upon the public, every year, in the various departments of science, literature, history, are executed in a style not unworthy the pre-

* Institutes, vol. i. 2.

sent age, it is no slight disgrace that our laws are still written in a dialect, which, if less uncouth than that used in the past centuries, is still far from being worthy the mental cultivation and the profound acquirements of the eminent lawyers generally employed in drawing them up, under the direction of their authors. *A second thing required is, that the laws made, be as brief and as few* as possible. The great mass of the people diffused over this country, have but little leisure saved from unavoidable toils, to read. Part of that leisure ought, with propriety, to be occupied in reading works on religion, morals and politics —three branches of vital importance. There thus remains only a very small fraction which they can afford for the laws of the country; and, that they may turn this to the most profitable account, it is eminently desirable, that these laws should be expressed in as few words, and reduced to as small a number as possible.* Have our legislature, in past times, aimed at *this?* If they have not, they have overlooked one of the most material circumstances that should have entered into their calculations, and determined the *form* of their enactments. If they have, they have certainly been singularly unsuccessful. By what misemployed ingenuity, by what laborious collocation of words, by what unceasing accumulation of acts, they have extended the statute-book to its present ponderous magnitude, under which ordinary minds

* "As society advances to its perfection, the number of laws may be expected to diminish instead of increasing, and the science of legislation to be gradually simplified."—*Stewart's Elements*, vol. i. 250.

almost sink, and from which young inquirers almost shrink, it is difficult to say. "Such is the immense number of law-books, and their ponderous size, that it would require the age of the patriarchs to acquire a knowledge of them. They are literally Ossa piled on Pelion, a huge unformed mass, which no man can fathom. Lord Stanhope mentions a *little pocket compilation*, Viner's Abridgment, comprised into twenty volumes, folio. Mind, too, this is a mere abridgment—bare memoranda of the great originals; and had it been continued to the present time, it would have amounted to more than one hundred folio volumes. The most condensed edition of the statutes at large, yet given to the public, occupies thirty-nine volumes in quarto. "*Reports* of the decisions in the courts of justice," which become part of the law, "already amount to upwards of 280 volumes, exclusive of those which relate to election, admiralty, and ecclesiastical law. Let us pause a moment, to reflect on this mass of legal lumber, this grossly absurd system of legislation. How can any person be acquainted with English law? How can the legislature have gone on, for centuries, legislating on such an absurd presumption—that every individual in the empire was acquainted with their enactments? How can men of business read, digest, and understand," 280 volumes of reports, and 39 quarto volumes of statutes? "How can the people understand the law, when even the judges, whose whole lives are devoted to the subject, are in the most pitiable state of perplexity, uncertainty, and contradiction?"

It were of great importance to the community, did legislators acquire a suitable education for the business they undertake. General education is not sufficient. A man may be a profound linguist, an acute metaphysician, an original poet, and even a distinguished lawyer, without possessing the appropriate qualifications requisite to make a good legislator. Independently of natural talents, and virtuous principles, would it not be a desirable thing that he should receive a course of correct instruction in the principles of legislation, jurisprudence, and political economy, before he is entrusted with the important office of making laws? In the ordinary affairs of life, men do not engage with a rational prospect of success, in common occupations, till they have received suitable training. A surgeon is not employed to prescribe for the body, till he has made himself acquainted with its structure, its functions, the varied disorders to which it is liable, and the appropriate modes of treatment that have been recommended. The barrister cannot take a brief, even in a case that has arisen about a few pounds or a barren rock, till he has received a professional education extending through several years, and occasioning considerable expenses. Even the mechanic cannot procure employment in the humblest factory, nor produce work of a passable description, till he has acquired his trade by years of industrious application and mental reflection. And shall it be thought, that men are qualified to occupy seats in the senate of this great country, and to pass laws adapted to the state of its multifarious interests, without having considered, with due attention, the

genuine principles of legislation, and the primary elements of British jurisprudence? Some *have* thought so; for even in that house, instructive as are the addresses delivered by particular members, and judicious as are the decisions adopted on particular occasions, are individuals deplorably deficient in the essential qualifications they should possess. With a stock of political ideas that might have ample room in the brain of any schoolboy, and with a fund of political bigotry that no schoolboy could ever indulge, have they taken stations beside the greatest luminaries now in our political horizon. We would wish to look up with veneration towards all legislators; but how *can* we *to them?* When we hear them mourning over the progress of education among the lower orders, even in *benighted England*—when we see them anxious to arrest the course of political intelligence by the reimposition, on the press, of fetters which were shivered to pieces at the Revolution,—when we see them sacrificing, at the shrine of aristocratic insolence, the dearest rights which an independent people can demand, and a patriotic government can grant,—in one word, when we behold them opposing, to the utmost extent of their power exerted with matchless virulence, every measure for elevating the minds of the community, increasing their legitimate influence, and diminishing their excessive burdens, what, I ask, *can* we think of them? Can we esteem them as disinterested patriots,—as enlightened lawgivers? Can we hail their speeches with bursts of high admiration, welcome their proposals with promises of cordial support, and commend their de-

signs to the blessing of the Almighty Potentate? No, the best wishes we can cherish, for their credit and our interest, is, that they may speedily quit stations the momentous duties of which they are incompetent to perform, and finally return to those rural sports, the local regulation of which it was the grossest presumption in them ever to have abandoned.

I have reserved to the close one principle of vital moment in the estimation of every freeman; and it is this, that *the legislature ought to be chosen by the community.* It has been usual in several countries to allow the chief magistrate and the hereditary peers great influence in the nomination of the legislators. Even in our own country, this practice, involving undue assumption on the one hand, and abject servitude on the other, has been long tolerated. At length, however, the evil has been assailed in the very sanctuary where it has hitherto found protection, with an energy of moral principle that threatens its speedy extinction; and should the great measure of reform carried the other day,* by a majority of the Commons, pass into a law, the people shall have recovered the elective franchise to a greater extent than it has ever been enjoyed, even in this ancient land. But leaving this to the support of its friends, and the control of providence, I affirm that it is the *undoubted right of the community* to elect their representatives in the legislature. When any individuals thrust themselves into that house, without *their*

* Wednesday Morning, Sept. 21, 1831.

consent, even though they have the patronage of the greatest peer, or the mightiest prince in the kingdom, they are downright usurpers. They are occupying seats to which they have not been invited, performing services for which they have not been engaged, and forging legal fetters, which it were no more than virtuous resistance to throw back in their faces. Only those who have been raised to this dignity by the unbiassed suffrages, or with the implied consent *of the people*, are qualified to pass laws entitled to their conscientious obedience. "This legislative," says Locke, "is not only the supreme power of the commonwealth, but sacred and unalterable *in the hands where the community have once placed it;* nor can any edict of any body else, in what form soever conceived, or by what power soever backed, have the force and obligation of a law, which has not its sanction from *that legislature which the public has chosen and appointed:* for without this the law could not have that which is absolutely necessary to its being a law—the consent of the society, over whom nobody can have a power to make laws but by their own consent, and by authority received from them."* "The lawful power of making laws to command whole politic societies of men, belonging so properly unto the same entire societies," says Hooker, "that for any prince or potentate of what kind soever upon earth, to exercise the same of himself, and not by express commission immediately and personally received from God, or else by authority derived at the

* Works, vol. v. 416, 17

first from their consent, upon whose persons they impose laws, *it is no better than mere tyranny.* Laws they are not, therefore, which public approbation hath not made so."*

It is an important question, *what proportion* of the population should be allowed to exercise the elective right. That all criminals, paupers, and others not capable of judging for themselves, from imbecility of mind, or infelicity of situation, are properly excluded, is readily admitted. It is admitted, too, that proprietors of the soil, holders of other property, and persons of superior intelligence, should have their respective rights protected, and their due influence secured. But the greatest caution is necessary to avoid all *unnecessary* restrictions on a privilege granted by a gracious providence for a noble purpose. "The degree of restraint it is impossible in any case to settle precisely. But it ought to be the constant aim of every wise public council to find out, by cautious experiments, and rational cool endeavours, with how little, not how much, of this restraint the community can subsist. *For liberty is a good to be improved, and not an evil to be lessened.*"† Accordingly, without going the length of universal suffrage, we cannot but think, that population ought chiefly to regulate the number of representatives which any district delegates. Will any one argue, that five millions of active men—the working classes who have no other property than their labour—are of little value in the state? Will any one say, that their poli-

* Eccles. Pol. 21. † Burke.

tical rights deserve no protection, and their just wishes no deference? Surely, if the legislature should represent all the elements of power in the kingdom, land, money, trade, learning, intelligence —is it just to exclude the *physical strength*, by which its wealth is created, its battles fought, and its honours upheld? "Upon this ground," says Ferguson, "liberty seems to require, that every member of the commonwealth should have access, before the law is enacted, to guard himself against any wrongs to which he may be exposed from the admission of any partial regulation; or, in other words, that the people of every separate order or rank, however distinguished by fortune, should each have an active share in the legislature of their country."*

* Ferguson's Principles, vol. ii. 467. It is gratifying to find the most distinguished writers—the great minds who have exerted an influence, the effects of which shall survive the deeds of heroes, and emperors,—advocating the same liberal view. "It will not be controverted," says Sir James Mackintosh, "that the object of a representative legislature is to collect the *general will*. Representation is an expedient for peacefully, systematically, and unequivocally collecting this *universal voice*."—Vind. 263, 336. "The virtue, spirit, and essence of a House of Commons consists," says Burke, "in its being the *express image of the feelings of the nation*. To follow, not to force the *public inclination*, to give a direction, a form, a technical dress and a specific sanction to the *general sense of the community*, is the true end of legislature."—Two Letters to Gentlemen in Bristol, 52. "If the labouring part of the people," says Hall, "are not competent to *choose* legislators, the English constitution is essentially wrong. Representation may be considered as complete, when it collects to a sufficient extent, and transmits with perfect fidelity, *the real sentiments of the people*."—Apology, 28, 64. "If it were probable," says Blackstone, "that every man would give his vote freely, and without influence of any kind, then, upon the true theory and general principles of liberty, every member of the community, however poor, should have a vote in electing these delegates, to whose charge is committed the disposal of his property, his liberty, and his life. But, since that can hardly

II. The Judicial Branch.

The *object* for which this branch has been instituted in every good government, is the administration of justice, according to the laws which have been passed by the legislative branch. Of what use were these laws, though the dictates of supreme excellence, and the means of national prosperity, if they remained unapplied? That they may produce the beneficial effects for which they have been enacted and promulgated, it is necessary that they be carried into effect in the regulation of civil, criminal, and political matters. Hence arises the absolute necessity of particular courts erected in different parts of the empire, and invested with different kinds of jurisdiction, for the authoritative interpretation, and the judicial application of the existing laws.

When the laws of a country are good, the judicial office becomes one of the most excellent, important, and honourable. On its faithful execution depend the peace, the order, the security, the prosperity, and all the valuable privileges that accrue from the political union. "A wise and upright judiciary is a public blessing which no language can adequately exhibit, which no people can too highly prize, and too strenuously vindicate; and without which no

be expected in persons of indigent fortunes, or such as are under the immediate dominion of others, all popular states have been obliged to establish certain qualifications; whereby some, who are suspected to have no will of their own, are excluded from voting, in order to set other individuals, whose wills may be supposed independent, more thoroughly upon a level with each other." Vol. i. p. 171.

people can be safe or happy."* Abolish this institution in a country, its social system would rush to chaos, its firmest bulwark would fall into ruins, and its noblest column be broken into fragments; unblushing crime would succeed to increasing virtue, universal confusion to general tranquillity, and gloomy barbarism to advancing civilization. Accordingly, no officer of state deserves to be held in higher esteem, and rewarded with warmer admiration, than an enlightened, pious, and upright judge. Such a character is justly regarded as the moral deputy, the venerable substitute, the living image of the Supreme Judge, from whose hand he has derived, through a constitutional channel, his commission, and in whose name he administers, through legal forms, impartial justice. "By me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth."†

The judicial office has the sanction of the divine appointment. Scarcely had the original Hebrews been formed into a political community, when they were furnished with the order of judges placed over them, by the required intervention of Moses, with their own voluntary consent. "*Moreover, thou shalt provide out of all the people, able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them, to be rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens.*‡ *And let them judge the people at all seasons:*

* Dwight, vol. iv. 137. † Prov. viii. 16.

‡ "A constitution strikingly resembling, if not the foundation of that which was established in England by the wise Alfred, whereby he established *sheriffs* in counties, *centgraves* in hundreds, and decemvirs in tithings."—Sacred History, vol. i. 124, 125.

*and it shall be that every great matter they shall bring unto thee, but every small matter they shall judge."** "*Judges and officers shalt thou make thee in all thy gates, which the Lord thy God giveth thee throughout thy tribes; and they shall judge the people with just judgment. Thou shalt not wrest judgment, thou shalt not respect persons; neither take a gift: for a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous."*† But I need not multiply quotations for the purpose of proving, that the institution of judges is agreeable to the revealed will of God. Let it be remembered, that he has prescribed the chief qualifications they should possess, the invaluable duties they should perform, the pure principles by which their minds should be governed, and the momentous objects to which their anxious endeavours should be directed,—let it be remembered, that he encourages them to unwearied diligence by the promise of requisite assistance, dissuades them from practical errors by the threat of severe displeasure, and supports them under their peculiar difficulties with the prospect of gracious rewards, and every reader will admit they are an exalted class, the actual appointment of whom, on proper conditions, has the impress of the divine authority, and the sanction of the divine approbation.

Judges should take particular care, that they execute justice *according to the established laws of the land.* There are, I admit, cases occasionally

* Exodus xviii. 21, 22.

† Deut. xvi. 18, 19.

occurring in which they are allowed to decide on the ordinary principles of *equity*. There are cases which involve questions that have never been determined, either by written statutes, or by certain precedents, and that belong to the courts of equity, which are "continually employed in finding out and providing law remedies for those new species of cases, for which neither the courts of common law nor the legislature have yet found it convenient or practicable to establish any."* But, even in *such cases*, they must guard against the slightest deviation both from the general acts that have even a remote bearing upon them, and from the particular decisions given by themselves, of which regular records are kept. In all other cases, I repeat, the established laws of the land are the appointed guide which they should follow. Never, in considering these, are they warranted to prefer their own private discretion, however sound, the will of the chief magistrate, however patriotic, or the wishes of the privileged orders, however condescending. *The national will concentrated in the legislature* has fixed the course which they should, conscientiously, pursue; and unconstitutional are their pretensions when they presume, under any pretext whatever, to adopt another. That moment, they place their own minds above the law, violate their oaths of fidelity, forfeit the judicial function with which they were intrusted on conditions they have not kept, and introduce a *new principle*, from which the most disas-

* De Lolme's Constitution of England, 148.

trous consequences to the dearest interests of the country may flow. Should they happen to be men of narrow views and malevolent passions, they will naturally become the servile tools of the tyrannical administration to which they cringe; and, worthy of their great prototype, the infamous Jefferies, will recklessly involve their country in another campaign of judicial murders, of which the truest patriots will be the first victims. Thus "it were dangerous to allow of any latitude, or any exercise of discretion in the application of law. This is the tenure by which every citizen holds his right; and it were nugatory to say, that the tenure of law were secure, if it might be interpreted and applied at discretion. If any interest is to be admitted in the tribunals of justice, it should certainly be no other than the general interest of the people at large; an interest which is equivalent to justify itself; which requires that no right should be violated, or that no violation of right should escape punishment."*

Judges, in administering the laws, *should study the most rigid impartiality.* Generally speaking, there are only two classes in political society who fall under this jurisdiction—the *rich* and the *poor.* The former class, whatever the subordinate divisions they form—princes, nobles, bishops, extensive proprietors, opulent merchants, have ever been united by a common feeling, more powerful than the petty repugnancies which have sometimes threatened their temporary separation. "Whatever may

* Ferguson's Principles, &c. vol. ii. 477, 479.

be the little conflicts of ecclesiastical with secular, of commercial with landed opulence, they have one common interest to preserve, the elevated place to which the social order has raised them. There never was, or will be, in civilized society, but two grand interests, that of the rich, and that of the poor." Now, the judges, carrying with them to the bench the same propensities which influence other men, are liable, at all times, to give a preference to the rich. They are in danger of palliating the crimes with which *they* are charged, of mitigating the penalties which they have incurred, and of deciding in their favour when those who appear in court against them are from the humble classes. Against this *cruel* partiality, how instructive, impressive, solemn, the reiterated warnings addressed to them in that volume with which, if they are good men, and just rulers, they will cultivate an intimate acquaintance! "*Hear the causes between your brethren,*" I cite only a specimen, "*and judge righteously between every man and his brother, and the stranger that is with him. Ye shall not respect persons in judgment, but you shall hear the small as well as the great; you shall not be afraid of the face of man, for the judgment is God's.*" "*Take heed what ye do; for ye judge not for man, but for the Lord, who is with you in the judgment. Wherefore now, let the fear of the Lord be upon you, take heed and do it; for there is no iniquity with the Lord our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts.*"* But there is a partiality to the *poor*, against which

* Deut. i. 16, 17. 2 Chron. xix. 6, 7.

they should also guard. From a mean hankering after popularity, or from the defective regulation of sympathy, they *may* sacrifice, to *their* rapacious claims, the just rights of the higher orders. Now, revelation, whose profound and comprehensive dissections of human character we can never sufficiently prize, provides against this error, though of rare occurrence, by an express enactment. "Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment; thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty; but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour." "Neither shalt thou countenance a poor man in his cause."* A provision, certainly, not more just toward his adversary than humane to the indigent litigant himself, by keeping him from the numberless vexations and heavy expenses attending prosecutions raised on trivial grounds.

It is a wise provision that establishes the judges in office for life, or till misconduct requires their removal.† Two advantages are derived from this provision. It furnishes *a powerful motive to their diligent study* of the legal code, without which there could be no intelligent judges. Were they removable at the pleasure of an arbitrary sovereign, or the command of a dominant faction, few would undertake the arduous task of examining the huge mass of our multiplied laws. Men of good abilities and enterprising spirit would prefer other professions, in which they might acquire ample emoluments, and merited reputation, without suffering injustice from

* Lev. xix. 15. Exod. xxiii. 3. † Ad vitam, aut culpam.

royal caprice or ministerial resentment. But, when they know that legal acquirements, associated with other essential requisites, *may* raise them to the bench, and that, once invested with the judicial function, they cannot be removed even by the highest power in the state, unless they have fallen into some offence deserving degradation, they have suitable encouragement to encounter with ardour those legal researches that are in themselves so forbidding, and to seek that legal knowledge which shall render them, other qualifications being possessed, able magistrates. Another advantage derived from making their office permanent, is, that *it renders them independent of government.* Were they subject to removal by the mere will of the monarch, they would be strongly tempted to secure and retain his favour by abject subserviency. They would scarce hazard any decisions, however loudly demanded by justice, humanity, and patriotism, that would be likely to thwart his interested views and provoke his powerful resentments. A mean, temporizing, truckling race, they would barter the sacred rights of *justice* for the preservation of their own paltry interests, and sacrifice, with impure hands, the dearest privileges of their country to the transient gratifications of their sovereign. But, when they know, that their retention of office depends only on their own good behaviour,—that, if they administer justice by a strict adherence to the laws promulgated, they may bid defiance to the frowns of mere politicians, they feel, that they have a peculiar incentive to the maintenance of virtuous independence, and the execution of impartial jus-

tice, however humble the rank they hold in the judicial scale, and however violent the changes that occur in the political system.

Judges should ever be chosen on account of the eminent qualifications they possess. Neither private friendship nor political subservience, should dictate a measure so essential to the moral well-being, and the physical prosperity of the community. It is not enough that the candidate has been a willing associate of a prince in his splendid pleasures, or an unquestioning supporter of a minister in his daring measures. It is not enough that his mind is enriched with stores of classic learning, the fruits of ardent study, or his tongue pours forth copious streams of impassioned eloquence seldom equalled at the bar. Other qualifications are necessary,—clear judgment, incorruptible integrity, extensive acquaintance with law, indefatigable perseverance in investigation,—to render him an accurate interpreter of law, and an enlightened minister of justice, an ornament to the bench, and a benefactor to the country.* Who does not admire the noble generosity, the exalted patriotism with which the first protector acted in this momentous matter? "Cromwell," I use the words of the aristocratic Burke, "Cromwell, when he attempted to legalize his power, and to settle his conquered country in a state of order, did not look for dispensers of justice in the instruments of his usurpa-

* "The qualifications for the judicial office, as laid down by Jethro, on that occasion, are such as ought still to guide all who have the nomination of these high officers: *able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness.*"—Mr. Sheriff Wood's Sacred History, vol. i. 125.

tion. Quite the contrary. He sought out, with great solicitude and selection, and even from the party most opposite to his designs, men of weight, and decorum of character; men unstained with the violence of the times, and with hands not fouled with confiscation and sacrilege; for he chose a *Hale* for his chief-justice, though he absolutely refused to take his civic oaths, or to make any acknowledgment whatsoever of the legality of his government. Cromwell told this great lawyer, that since he did not approve his title, all he required of him was to administer, in a manner agreeable to his pure sentiments, and unspotted character, that justice without which human society cannot subsist; that it was not his particular government, but civil order itself, which, as a judge, he wished him to support. Accordingly, we are indebted to this act of his for the preservation of our laws, which some senseless assertors of the rights of men were then on the point of entirely erasing, as relics of feudality and barbarism. Besides, he gave in the appointment of that man, to that age, and to all posterity, the most brilliant example of sincere and fervent piety, exact justice, and profound jurisprudence."*

It may be doubted, whether the judicial department in this country receives that measure of approbation to which it is entitled from all classes. We are too prone to admire the successful struggles of the mere politician in the senate, and the sanguinary exploits of the mere warrior in the field. For my

* Howard's Beauties, vol. v. 47, 48.

own part, I look up even to the humblest judge who, without eclat, dispenses equal justice to all ranks, vindicating the innocent, and punishing the guilty, protecting the rights of the weak, and repressing the arrogance of the powerful, as a character ineffably superior, both in moral grandeur and in ultimate utility, even to the wisest statesman, whose only art is mere debating, and to the bravest general, whose only trade is wholesale murder. From *his* tribunal, as from a sacred oracle, go forth the responses of justice, cheering the hearts of the virtuous, and curbing the passions of the disorderly. From his lips descend the authoritative expositions of the best laws, the solemn decisions of strict justice, and the melting tones of affectionate warning. That all our judges possess a character corresponding to this account, I am far from even insinuating. Yet, notwithstanding the imperfections that appear in parts of their official conduct when fully examined, and notwithstanding their decided leaning to the crown, from which they have received their lucrative appointments, and to which they, perhaps, look for further promotion, it must be acknowledged, they contribute an amount of good to the community that entitles their characters to our highest respect, and their services to our warmest gratitude.

Excellent, and respectable, and useful as our judges generally are, they might, with some advantage, emulate the superior eminence attributed to the *American judiciary*, in the following passage from the pen of an intelligent citizen. "The administration of justice in this country, where the

judge, without a guard, without a soldier, withou pomp, decides upon the dearest interests of the citizen, trusting chiefly to the moral sentiment of the community for the execution of his decrees, is the most beautiful and encouraging aspect, under which our government can be viewed. We repeat it, there is nothing in public affairs so venerable as the voice of Justice, speaking through her delegated ministers, reaching and subduing the high as well as the low, setting a defence around the splendid mansion of wealth, and the lowly hut of poverty, redressing wrong, vindicating innocence, humbling the oppressor, and publishing the rights of human nature to every human being. We confess, that we often turn with pain and humiliation from the hall of Congress, where we see the legislator forgetting the majesty of his function, forgetting his relation to a vast and growing community, and sacrificing to his party, or to himself, the public weal; and it comforts us to turn to the Court of Justice, where the dispenser of the laws, shutting his ear against all solicitations of friendship, or interest, dissolving for a time every private tie, forgetting public opinion, and withstanding public feeling,—asks only what is RIGHT. To our courts, the resorts and refuge of weakness and innocence, we look with hope and joy. We boast, with a virtuous pride, that no breath of corruption has as yet tainted their pure air. To this department of government we cannot ascribe too much importance. Over this, we cannot watch too jealously. Every encroachment on its independence, we should resent and repel as the chief wrong our

country can sustain. Wo, wo, to the impious hand which would shake this most sacred and precious column of the social edifice."

III. The Executive Branch.

The great object for which this branch is requisite, is the direction of the national force for securing the rights of the community against violation, either from irregular members, or from foreign states. This is an object always confided to a first magistrate, who is intrusted with the necessary powers, which he must wield with great prudence, unwearied diligence, and irresistible energy. What *title* he should receive, does not seem of great consequence. Provided he discharges, with fidelity, the duties of the great trust reposed in him,—provided he keeps within the prescribed bounds of the constitution he is appointed to administer,—provided he does not exact greater revenue for his personal and domestic expenditure than the importance of his public services deserves,—and provided the outward respect paid to him by the people does not degenerate into degrading servility, resembling the blind adoration offered to oriental princes, it does seem a matter of extreme indifference by what designation he shall be distinguished from other magistrates officiating in the same country. If he possesses an elevated spirit, and appreciates genuine greatness, he will place his highest dignity in being the *head* of an intelligent, virtuous, free and prosperous community,

and his chief revenue in the esteem, gratitude, and confidence which they offer to his moral worth, disinterested patriotism, and incorruptible fidelity.

The executive magistrate must ever be viewed as subordinate to the legislature. We are, no doubt, accustomed to call him, in language that usage has sanctioned, the supreme ruler. When we imagine to ourselves him exalted on the throne, and stretching his sceptre over millions—when we see the judges, the sheriffs, the justices, and other officers deriving their commissions from him,—when we survey all classes, from the humblest plebeian to the haughtiest patrician, looking up to him, some with profound respect, and others with crouching submission, we are apt to consider him the depository of the highest power in the state. This, however, is not the case. However exalted in civil dignity, however extensive the powers with which he is intrusted for the protection of the public interest, and however marked the civil homage with which all ranks honour him on account of his high office, he *is inferior* to that branch of political authority which the nation delegates to its representatives *for making laws*—the legislative, and which is competent not only to pass statutes for his punctual execution, but even to assign limits to his highest prerogatives. He should beware of supposing himself higher than the national will expressed through the organ of fair representation. It is this supposition, so congenial to his natural propensities, and so conducive to his selfish objects, that has originated all the arbitrary edicts, all the oppressive exactions, and all the sanguinary atrocities that

have, in past ages, exposed the thrones of tyrants to violent subversion, and their memories to unrestrained execration.

Nor is it a valid objection, that the executive magistrate has the power of convoking the legislature in monarchical countries. This is only a trust which the community have granted him under certain limitations, and for specified ends. As the representatives could not sit during the whole year without great inconvenience to their private affairs, or great expense to their respective constituents,—as the occurrence of sudden emergencies requires that they should assemble at the earliest period, for the prevention of dreaded evils, the correction of domestic disorders, and the acquisition of offered advantages, no less than the despatch of the ordinary business, it has been deemed expedient to leave to his determination, aided by wise counsellors, the time at which they should convene, during the successive sessions, for which they have been chosen. But this gives him no superiority whatever over them. Should he, with arbitrary sentiments, ever neglect calling them together when the public exigencies evidently require,—should he, with traitorous designs, ever prevent them from meeting for legitimate purposes, according to the express provisions of the constitution,—or should he, by coercive measures, ever attempt to control the course of their regular discussions, or oppose the execution of their just decisions, then would he be guilty of perverting, to improper ends, the power vested in him for the public good, and deserving of immediate resistance rather than of the smallest support. "I say,"

exclaims Locke, "using force upon the people without authority, and contrary to the trust put in him that does so, is a state of war with the people, who have a right to reinstate their legislative in the exercise of their power; for when they are hindered by any force from what is so necessary to the society, and wherein the safety and preservation of the people consists, *the people have a right to remove it by force.*"*

The executive magistrate should govern according to the known laws of the constitution. Is not a servant bound to perform the duties for which he has been hired, according to the *orders* of his employer? Would not he act a very irregular part, should he ever prefer either the suggestions of his own private judgment, or the wishes of some third party? Now, dignify a king with whatever titles you choose, surround him with whatever trappings imagination can devise, and enrich him with whatever treasures a prosperous country can afford, you can never prove him more than the chief servant of the community—a servant, no doubt, of great value, and entitled to high respect, but still a servant who owes the exalted station he fills to the consent of the people, and the ample remuneration he receives to their bounty. It follows, that he is bound to act, according to their commands made known through the medium of their accredited representatives, and embodied in that system of laws which has received the name of constitution. Any attempt to violate these would breathe

* Vol. v. p. 430.

a spirit that might well justify the most salutary alarm and the most prompt repression, and indicate the existence of designs, the gradual execution of which might subvert the dearest liberties and noblest institutions of the land.

Now, there are *three* ways in which the first magistrate may set aside the laws of the constitution. 1st, *By erroneous interpretation.* Even were laws expressed in a more perspicuous style than legislators have hitherto employed, it were not difficult to assign them a false meaning favourable to his sinister ends. For this purpose he might not himself have the requisite ingenuity inherited from his boasted ancestors, nor the requisite leisure saved from his numerous engagements. But with the power of conferring titles, orders, and pensions, he could easily procure lawyers who would, with eminent plausibility, defend almost any interpretation that might favour the indulgence of his illicit propensities, and the accomplishment of his unjust projects. It is, therefore, a wise precaution to refuse him, in any degree, the right of interpreting constitutional laws—a right of which he might make a very dangerous use, should his mind have been perverted by arbitrary maxims, or polluted with selfish passions. "When you grant the interpretation of laws to a king," affirms Buchanan, "you grant him such a licence, as the law doth not tell what the lawgiver meaneth, or what is good and equal for all in general, but what may make for the interpreter's benefit, so that he may bend it to all actions for his own benefit or advantage, as the Lesbian rule. If we shall

once admit this, it will be to no purpose to make good laws for teaching a good prince his duty, and hem in an ill king."* 2d, *By arbitrary edicts.* Such deeds have often been issued by tyrants who were determined on carrying measures which they knew the established charters did not allow, and the existing legislatures would not sanction. Often too have ignorant communities, enslaved by superstitious reverence for royalty, and pliant counsellors, wedded to extravagant notions of prerogative, submitted with a tameness which has sometimes been punished by the mortifying humiliations to which they were afterwards exposed. It was thus that the Stuarts overthrew the fundamental laws of this country, violated the sacred rights of the people, and procured their final degradation from a throne which they had neither the talents, the attainments, nor the virtues to occupy. It was thus that the Bourbons levelled a blow at the charter which was given France at the restoration, provoked a convulsion which has sent its vibrations through the neighbouring kingdoms, and accelerated their expulsion from an empire which they had drenched, in former times, with the blood of its purest citizens. Let nations protest, with due energy, against such a usurpation of the right which they have given to their chosen legislatures, and which can never be exercised with justice, excepting in those hands in which they have placed it. 3d, *By actual force.* The time has gone by, I believe, when governments, with the view of effecting their

* De Jure Regni, 28.

sinister purposes, will venture to trample down constitutional laws, by employing military violence. Yet, when one looks at the standing armies which they support on a large scale, the abject submission which they have been trained to yield, and the blind promptitude with which they have been accustomed to rush into the most criminal wars, as if they had been divested of every civil sentiment and of every humane feeling, he must not be too sanguine. To reconcile the existence of such armies—armies furnished with the chief force of the countries that endure them, systematically inured to habits of unreflecting obedience, and impressed with the belief that dexterity in their murderous practices is the perfection of good soldiers,—with the security of constitutional freedom, is a tremendous problem—a moral impossibility. Rulers have too long placed their security in the valour of mercenary troops, rather than in the affection of virtuous citizens, and courted admiration by the splendour of costly victories, rather than by the execution of beneficial improvements. It is time they were abating their passion for military glory, surrounding themselves with pacific citizens rather than fiery warriors, and, under the shade of liberal institutions, elevating the arts of peace, and extending the happiness of mankind.

But, while the executive magistrate is bound to govern according to the laws of the constitution, *he is left to act, in various cases, according to his own discretion.* This discretion is what has been called *prerogative*—a power of acting for the public good, without the prescription of the law—a power of great

importance which every community intrusts to the chief magistrate, and regulates by various limitations, the expediency of which has been ascertained either from theoretic discussion, or from practical experience. On this power the following remarks are offered. It *is absolutely necessary.* No doubt, could the legislature forsee future events, so as to provide for each by a special enactment, this would be much better than leaving a discretionary power to a single individual placed in a situation unfavourable for accurate discrimination. But since the humblest pretensions to such foresight would be nullified by subsequent failures,—since numerous cases occur, every week, for which legislative sagacity has made no particular provision—since the public good consistently with justice requires, that the law itself should not, in certain cases, be executed with inflexible rigour,*—since the assembling of the legislative for the discussion of every petty case that might happen beyond the ordinary course of civil policy, would occasion great inconvenience to conscientious members,—and, since it is of the utmost importance to justice, order, and commerce, that the utmost despatch should be observed in deciding all such cases, it seems necessary that the requisite discretion should be lodged somewhere for speedy exercise. And where can it be lodged with a greater prospect of advantage to the community, than in the chief ma-

* "Prerogative can be nothing but the people's permitting their rulers to do several things, of their own free choice, where the law was silent, and sometimes too against the direct letter of the law, for the public good."—*Locke*, vol. v. p. 437.

gistrate whom they have invested with high authority, whose judgment is assisted by responsible counsellors, and whose administration is in continual operation?—*This power is committed to the chief magistrate for no other purpose than the public good.* As an individual, he may consult his private interests and his particular friends, in any thing not injurious to the public weal. It were cruel to prevent the gratification of private feelings by legitimate means, or the promotion of particular interests by just measures. But, as the *head* of the state, he has no moral or legal right to propose any other end than the good of the community, in exerting any branch of his prerogative. Whether he confers honours, of which he is the proper fountain, or bestows pensions from the fund allowed him for this purpose,—whether he declares war or makes peace,—whether he pardons the criminals who have been convicted, or orders them for instant execution,—whether he despatches ambassadors to foreign courts, or engages consuls in watching over the interests of foreign trade,—whether he levies armies or equips fleets, he is to have no higher purpose than the greatest good of the community from whom he has received his high office. If he keeps this end steadily before his mind,—if all the acts of his prerogative bear indelible proofs that this is the chief motive that influences his choice,—if he fills the offices placed at his disposal with persons of suitable qualifications for the duties required from them,—if, with virtuous indignation, he spurns from his presence the crowds of hungry aspirants who solicit places on the mere ground of birth, or title, or

sycophancy,—and if, with generous self-denial, he restricts his own rights when he sees the exercise of them, to the utmost extent allowed by law, would interfere with the public welfare, he may rest assured, that the people will, in almost every case, view his prerogative with great satisfaction, and his reign with heartfelt gratitude.—It is also worthy of notice, *that this power diminishes as legislation advances.* When a constitution is in its infancy, having few written laws, the prerogative accorded to the first magistrate is very extensive. To his discretion are referred numerous matters for which the statutes that have been passed make no provision. But, as the community advances in the career of civilization,—as the various interests in the state become the distinct objects of legislative care,—and as experience proves how prone princes are, under selfish propensities, to turn to their own private ends a power given them for the public benefit, new limitations are prescribed by the national representatives, to whom the right of legislating, in all civil matters, has been delegated. Nor will a good king reckon this an evil. As a good man esteems it one of his greatest privileges to have his passions curbed, and his actions regulated, by the laws of religion, so a truly good king will be thankful to that legislature which limits his private inclinations, and his discretionary powers, by wise laws. When he remembers the momentous importance of the affairs placed under his direction, and subjected to his determination,—when he thinks how injurious to millions may prove the false views to which his own mind might come, under narrow prejudices and

selfish passions,—when he calculates, too, the tremendous responsibility he encounters in settling the gravest questions by an appeal only to his fallible judgment, or fluctuating inclinations, he, surely, has reason to feel satisfaction with the progressive limitations which are set to his royal prerogative,—with the legal barriers which are erected against the pernicious sallies of his unrestrained passions, which might, otherwise, drive him into acts alike injurious to his own future tranquillity and his people's growing prosperity.

It is a matter of great importance to determine, on sound principles, the amount of pecuniary remuneration that shall be paid to the chief magistrate. That that remuneration should be *liberal*, corresponding with the elevated station to which he has been raised, and the arduous service over which, in all its departments, he presides, is readily granted. It should be so liberal, as to enable him both to support a reasonable establishment, free of embarrassing difficulties that might distract his mind with unceasing anxieties, and expose his government to undeserved contempt, and to set an impressive example of generosity in assisting the deserving poor, encouraging benevolent institutions, and patronising all the branches of national industry. But parsimony to rulers is certainly not the error into which nations have, in past times, been inclined to fall. Extravagance, even on the broadest scale, has been their fault, notwithstanding the poverty in which the lower orders have, generally, been sunk. Not content with giving them a princely income adequate to maintain them in a

state of becoming splendour, they have poured into their palaces millions after millions, as if the highest grandeur of a country, and the greatest effectiveness of a government depended on the size of the civil list. I reprobate this monstrous extravagance, however, not merely because it abstracts from profitable industry an undue portion of the public capital, but chiefly because it exerts an injurious influence on the morals of the other classes in the community. From this cause arise three evils, which cannot fail to impress every careful observer. 1*st*, *The demoralization of the rulers themselves.* Among the salutary prohibitions laid down in the scriptures relative to the indulgences of a king, this is not the least prominent, "*that he shall not greatly multiply to himself silver and gold,—lest his heart be lifted up above his brethren, and he turn aside from the commandment to the right hand or to the left.*"* "Reason and experience," says Sydney, "teach us the same thing. If those nations that have been proud, luxurious, and vicious, have desired, by pomp and riches, to foment the vices of their princes, thereby to cherish their own; *such as have excelled in virtue and good discipline have abhorred it, and except the immediate exercise of their office, have kept their supreme magistrates to a manner of living little different from that of private men.* There is a necessity incumbent on every nation that lives in the like principle, to put a stop to the entrance of those vices that arise from the superfluity of riches, *by keeping*

* Deut. xvii. 17, 20.

their kings in that honest poverty, which is the mother and nurse of modesty, sobriety, and all manner of virtue; and no man can deny this to be well done, unless he will affirm, that pride, luxury, and vice are more profitable to a nation than the virtues that are upheld by frugality."* 2d, *Allowing extravagant revenues to a king, enables him to subvert the national liberties.* "Men," says the same writer, "are naturally propense to corruption; and, if he whose will and interest it is to corrupt them be furnished with the means, he will never fail to do it. Power, honours, riches, and the pleasures that attend them, are the baits by which men are drawn to prefer a personal interest before the public good; and the number of those who covet them is so great, that he who abounds in them will be able to gain so many to his service as shall be sufficient to subdue the rest. 'Tis hard to find a tyranny in the world that has not been introduced this way; for no man, by his own strength, could ever subdue a multitude,—none could ever bring many to be subservient to his ill designs, but by the rewards they received or hoped. By this means Cæsar accomplished his work, and overthrew the liberty of his country, and with it all that was then good in the world. They who were corrupted in their minds, desired to put all the power and riches into his hands, that he might distribute them to such as served him. And he, who was nothing less than covetous in his own nature, desired riches, that he might

* Discourses concerning Government, 275. Folio edition.

gain followers; and by the plunder of Gaul he corrupted those that betrayed Rome to him."*—A third evil produced by extravagant revenues paid to kings is, that *they are bringing monarchy into disrepute.* It were false delicacy, unworthy the crisis in which we live, to pretend that the people, in monarchical countries, are satisfied with the immense revenues which they are required to contribute to their governments. When they take time to compare the value of the services rendered with the amount of taxes exacted,—when they allow themselves to calculate how much smaller revenues might procure them all the benefits of good government without the evils of disgusting parsimony, especially when casting their eyes across the Atlantic, they see the simple machinery of a republican government producing all the requisite results for an expense extremely small, contrasted with the growing resources of that vast continent, they are not a little displeased at the immense expenditure which they must support, in all departments of the state, without reaping any unusual advantages. Reasoning from effects, they begin to think monarchy a most expensive form of civil polity; nor are they backward, with the imperfect discrimination belonging to the million, to charge this form with gross abuses, of which it is not necessarily productive. The truth is,—and I state it frankly, because the time is too serious for flattering compliments,—the truth is; if the existing monarchs wish to retain their crowns much longer, by any

* Discourses, 275.

other means than brute force, they must diminish their enormous expenses, so that they may lessen the public burdens, and adopt a simpler style of living, so that they may manifest sympathy with their neglected communities. It will neither be consistent with their continued security, nor conducive to their moral dignity, any longer to riot on all sorts of costly pleasures, and lavish millions on all kinds of courtly sycophants, while multitudes of their subjects, from whom taxes are wrung, are left without the materials of the coarsest subsistence, and the means of the humblest education.

I shall add only one other remark, that *the executive magistrate should enhance his personal excellence, and extend his public usefulness, would he take the revealed law as his supreme guide.* That he should conform, in every branch of his administration, to that memorable instrument which fixes the conditions of his elevation to office—*the constitution,* has already been argued at some length. But, even though he studies an anxious compliance with all the provisions it contains, and all the statutes that emanate, in successive sessions, from the legislature, there will remain numerous cases, of frequent occurrence, which are left, with great propriety, to his authorized discretion—his royal prerogative. Now, in determining these and other cases, I do not know a book furnished with better directions, of a general nature, than those presented in the sacred volume—directions so perspicuous, appropriate, and numerous as to solve many of the doubts that must arise in his

unassisted mind, and to suggest many of the measures which he should adopt in compliance with eternal rectitude—directions, too, inexpressibly more worthy of earnest consideration than the absurd precedents which were furnished by ages of comparative barbarism, and the adulatory counsels offered in the writings of simpering courtiers. How important to him, if he has received correct views, and imbibed right feelings, is this volume in the following particulars:—*It directs him in the impartial distribution of justice.* Retaining the moral infirmities that pervert the minds of other men in private stations, he is very apt to be partial in judgment to the rich, the powerful, and the noble. Accordingly, specific injunctions, favourable to the rights of the opposite classes, are addressed to him in this volume, with a minute particularity and an emphatic solemnity, that his mind should neither overlook nor disregard. "*Hear the word of the Lord, O king of Judah; execute ye judgment and righteousness, and deliver the spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor: and do no wrong, do no violence to the stranger, the fatherless, nor the widow, neither shed innocent blood in this place. Shalt thou reign because thou closest thyself in cedar? Did not thy father eat, and drink, and do judgment and justice, and then it was well with him? Wo unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and that write grievousness which they have prescribed; to turn aside the needy from judgment, and to take away the right from the poor of my people, that widows may be their prey, and that*

they may rob the fatherless."—It directs him also in the wise nomination of inferior magistrates.* Than this, few duties obligatory on him, are of greater importance to the best interests of his country. Should he appoint under him a multitude of little tyrants, selfish, rapacious, cruel, and immoral, what can be expected but the grossest violations of popular rights, and the greatest depredations on national goods? Should he appoint a gradation of well qualified individuals, pious, virtuous, conscientious, and patriotic, the public interests would prosper, in an eminent measure, as well by the influence of their good example, as by the execution of their magistratical duties. Accordingly, his choice is regulated by numerous commands, clear, peremptory, and as binding on him, at this day, as they were many centuries since, on those to whom they first came from the mouth of the Divinity. "*Moreover thou shalt provide, out of all the people, able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them to be rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens: and let them judge the people at all seasons."†—It would, also, impart pre-eminent energy to his administration.* This is a quality deemed, by the ablest writers, of the highest importance to its utility. That he should have moral courage sufficient to carry into effect

* Jerem. xxii. 2, 3, 15. Isaiah x. 1, 2. See similar expostulations scattered throughout the Scriptures.

† See the Note in page 227. Read also the striking address, Deut. xvi. 18—20, and the approved examples, 2 Chron. xix. 5—11, and Psalms lxxxii. and ci.

every decision of justice and humanity, despite of temporary reproaches and occasional tumults, is eminently desirable for the sake of order, morals, and prosperity. It were most hurtful to the country to have a chief so feeble, so timid, so fluctuating, as to be driven from the most generous purposes and the most beneficial reforms, by the breath of popular clamour unfounded in intelligence, virtue, or religion. But, how can he be expected to pursue a *direct* course amid the various allurements that draw him in opposite directions, if he has no moral energy in his own character, and no habitual reference to the divine law? As well might you expect, that a stately vessel launched on the troubled ocean during a furious storm, should move in her proper direction, without a pilot on board and a rudder at her stern. The truth has been demonstrated by experience, that the ruler under the influence of genuine piety, cherishes the only principle that can support, in trying situations, moral heroism,—occupies the only ground upon which he can stand against the attacks of disappointed factions, repel the shafts of calumny with undisturbed equanimity, and still pursue his career with an unwavering resolution which only the approval of his conscience and the presence of his God could support. "Were it of no advantage," then, "for subjects to have religion, it would still be of service, if *princes* had it, and if they whitened with foam the only rein which can restrain those who fear not human laws. A prince who loves and fears religion, *is a lion*, who stoops to the hand that strokes, or to the voice that appeases him. He who

fears and hates religion, is like the savage beast, that growls and bites the chain which prevents his flying on the passenger. He who has no religion at all, is that terrible animal who perceives his liberty, only when he tears in pieces and when he devours."* *Ought we not also, from regard to his future happiness, to insist on his devotion to religious duties and his obedience to the divine law?* Hard-hearted and short-sighted must be that people who value him only for the present services he renders without regarding his future destiny,—who mind only their selfish interests without seeking his eternal well-being,—who flatter him with the pernicious doctrine, that he may prove himself a most excellent ruler in all civil affairs, without cultivating religious principles in his bosom, or observing revealed laws in his conduct. Acting on more enlarged views, we should seek his future welfare, with an ardour proportioned to its superlative importance, and with a kindness merited by his great utility. As he has a spirit not less valuable than those with which we ourselves are endowed,—as he can secure future felicity on no easier terms than those prescribed to the humblest peasants,—as a multiplicity of objects exist to divert his mind from the due consideration of religious doctrines and the due performance of spiritual duties, so ought we, with the greater earnestness, fidelity, and frequency, to seek, by all competent methods, that God would write his law on his heart, constrain him to conscientious obedience, as the wisest policy

* Montesquieu's Spirit of Laws, vol. ii. p. 115, 116.

he can pursue, and exalt him to never-ending bliss, as the highest happiness he can enjoy. It is a poor affair to be caressed by fallible mortals, if he has not the approbation of the supreme Judge—to shine, for a few years, amid the splendours of an earthly crown, if he shall not inherit that bright diadem which shall dazzle, with undecaying radiance, through an endless succession of ages, in the heavenly kingdom.

SECTION V.

THE CIVIL OBJECTS OF GOVERNMENT.

An institution, so important as government, must have been appointed for purposes of the highest order. From these purposes the minds of men have been long diverted, by the multitude of *extraneous* objects to which governments have, in a criminal measure, prostituted their powers. We will endeavour to recall them, with some minuteness, in this chapter, both to gratify that laudable curiosity which prompts to the investigation of final causes, and to exhibit a standard of comparison, by which the excellence of the present establishments may be estimated.

Government, it will be readily admitted, *has not been instituted for the mere pleasure of the first magistrate.* No monarch, however long the line of his royal ancestors, however large the number of his personal excellencies, and however great the amount of his hereditary revenues, dare now allege, that the

millions diffused over his kingdom have been placed under his sway, entirely for his own private advantage. Time was indeed when they would have been considered as on a level with the herds, the flocks, and even the estates, which the owners might retain or sell, protect or rob, at pleasure. If they possessed strength, it was that they might fight *his* battles, projected for the gratification of his selfish passions and the aggrandizement of his particular family. If they acquired riches, it was that they might replenish *his* coffers, from which sums were lavished on private pleasures, splendid follies, and expensive favourites. In short, they could not call their *lives* their own; for, under arbitrary sway, they had to endure any barbarities that royal caprice might dictate, and incur any hazards in the field that royal ambition might demand. Happily, that time has now passed away, in those countries that have made the greatest advances in civilization. So general has become the diffusion of political intelligence, and so ardent the attachment to popular rights, that the contemptible absurdity of *millions made for one,* has been consigned to the tomb of oblivion, unhonoured with a tear, except from a few frivolous courtiers and drivelling princes. This is just as it should be. "Every man in office, however elevated, is bound to remember, as a being equally accountable to God with his fellowmen, that his personal rights are, by the divine constitution and pleasure, the same as those of others; that his personal gratification is of no more importance, and can claim no greater sacrifices, than that of others; that peculation, fraud, injustice, oppression,

drunkenness, gluttony, lewdness, sloth, profaneness, irreligion, and impiety, in a word, every crime is accompanied by greater guilt in him than in men at large; because of his superior advantages to know, and his superior inducements to perform his duty."*

Neither was government instituted *for the private advantage of the privileged orders.* I would, it is true, treat with respect these orders, when constituted on sound principles and subservient to useful purposes. I would even vindicate them from the indiscriminate abuse cast on them by unprincipled demagogues, on account of their superior rank, riches and influence. Let moral worth be esteemed,—let genuine patriotism be applauded,—let intellectual exploits be admired, wherever they appear in the social scale. At the same time, respecting the essential rights, the equal privileges of society, I must spurn the presumptuous idea of any class, however exalted, usurping an undue share in the government, and managing the national affairs solely for their private interest. No elevation of rank to which they have risen, no amount of wealth with which they are enriched, no extent of services which they have rendered to the country in former times, and no hereditary influence they have obtained in the councils of their sovereign, can warrant them to commit any encroachments on the natural rights of the lower orders and middling classes, either for securing the unjust advantages they covet, or for perpetuating those which they have long since

* Dwight's Theology, vol. iv. 133, 134.

acquired. It is not for them alone that the varied machinery of government was constructed by the wisdom of the Supreme artist, and committed to the direction of numerous agents chosen from the mass of the whole community.

But the great end, for which political government should be administered, is the good of all classes over whom it extends. This is the end preferred by the Deity,* who wills the greatest possible happiness to his rational creatures, and appoints the very fittest means for securing to them that important object. *This*, too, is the end sought by men, when they surrender to society several rights which belong to them as individuals, subject themselves to the control of others who, as to original rights, are their mere equals, and contribute a portion of their private wealth for supporting the officers that rule with their implied consent, if not by their formal election. This, in one word, is the very end chosen by virtuous rulers themselves, whether they obey the impulses of benevolence, the dictates of conscience, the articles of the political charter which they have been employed to execute, or the requisitions of the sacred writings, in which they will find their numerous duties prescribed, exemplified, and enforced. "*The Spirit of the Lord spake by me*," said a pious monarch, "*and his word was in my tongue—He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God: and he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender*.

* "He is the minister of God to thee *for good*."—Rom. xiii. 4.

grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain."* Could there have been selected a finer emblem of the beneficent reign of a good king over all ranks, than the sun in the heavens—a central luminary that pours his cheering beams over all parts of the earth, from the loftiest mountains to the lowest vales, and spreads his benignant influence over all classes of men, from the highest prince to the humblest peasant?

The great objects which a virtuous government will seek to the whole community, are numerous as well as important. It will contribute to the distinctness, accuracy, and utility of our apprehensions, if we arrange these objects under two divisions, which may be called *civil* and *ecclesiastical.* Under the former, will be arranged those duties which government owe to the *state* for the advancement of its civil interests; under the latter, will be placed those which it owes to the *church of Christ*, for the promotion of religious interests. To the former division, this section shall be devoted.

1. *A primary object of government is the formal declaration of the natural rights of man.* That man has made an *entire surrender* of his natural rights for the sake of the superior advantages derived from the social union, was, till lately, the favourite notion of some eminent statesmen. Burke, whose prolific fancy could invest any absurdity in the richest colours, and whose unrivalled eloquence could dazzle almost any mind with its brilliant fascinations, gave to it con-

* 2 Sam. xxiii. 2, 3, 4.

siderable plausibility. It is, however, wholly untenable. Man has given up only a portion of his natural sovereignty over his own actions,—that portion, the exercise of which, by himself, might have proved injurious to others. Thus, he has given up the liberty of punishing, by his own hand, the individuals from whose deliberate malice he sustains wrong,—the liberty of determining, by his own absolute pleasure, the conditions on which he shall hold property. "But there are some rights which cannot, with any propriety, be yielded up to human authority, because they are perfectly consistent with every benefit its appointment can procure. The free use of our faculties in distinguishing truth from falsehood, the exertion of corporeal powers without injury to others, the choice of a religion and worship, are branches of natural freedom which no government can justly alter or diminish, because their restraint cannot conduce to that security which is its proper object."* Now, the very first care of government should be a solemn declaration of these sacred, unalienable, and imprescriptible rights—a declaration which should be to the citizen the monitor of his duties, as well as the oracle of his privileges—a declaration by which the arbitrary propensities of the ruler might be checked, the licentious encroachments of the people corrected, and the general measures of the administration, on all occasions, fairly estimated.

Accordingly, in England, where the institutions

* Hall's Apology, &c. 52. Consult Locke, vol. v. 411, 415; Blackstone, vol. i. 121—145; Ferguson, vol. ii. 184—200; and last, though not least, Sir James Mackintosh's Vindiciæ Gallicæ, 204—221.

of government received earlier attention than anywhere else, such a declaration of the national rights has repeatedly been given. It first appeared in the great charter which was obtained, "sword in hand," from king John, and afterwards confirmed in parliament, by king Henry his son. It was subsequently corroborated by a great variety of statutes issued in different reigns, and incorporated with the written law. After being recognised, too, in the *petition of right*, assented to by Charles I. and in the *habeas corpus* passed under Charles II., it obtained a renewed exhibition in the *bill of rights* which was enacted by parliament, at the Revolution, and presented to the prince and princess of Orange when they were invited to ascend the vacant throne. "Thus much," says Blackstone, "for the *declaration* of our rights and liberties. The rights themselves, thus defined by these general statutes, consist in a number of private immunities; which will appear to be, indeed, no other than either that *residuum* of natural liberty, which is not required by the laws of society to be sacrificed to public convenience; or else those civil privileges which society hath engaged to provide, in lieu of the natural liberties so given up by individuals."

2. *Another important object of government is the preservation, by all practicable means, of domestic peace.* I assign this object a prominent place in the enumeration; for it is indispensably necessary to the other benefits sought from the political order. Without *this*, there can be no security for property and liberty, no encouragement to industry and frugality,

no stimulus to enterprise and activity. Without *this*, the worst passions are indulged—the greatest excesses are committed. Without *this*, the most useful arts are suspended, the most intimate relationships dissolved, the tender charities of social life supplanted by violent antipathies, and the whole land; instead of teeming with a happy population, is converted into a camp of ferocious barbarians. But let this prevail, by the suppression of those turbulent passions from which internal dissensions flow, and by the cultivation of those benevolent affections upon which universal harmony depends, and the happiest effects will follow. The citizens will pursue their secular avocations without interruption, insecurity, and distrust, —exemplify good morals without the vices that have usually stained the conduct of soldiers,—reap the immediate fruits of their labours without any very great deduction in the shape of taxes,—and realize an amount of social happiness commensurate with the varied capacities with which they are endowed, and the continued distributions of divine benignity to which they have access.

By what *means*, government shall best preserve peace among its own subjects, living on the same territory, is an important question. Certainly the *prompt administration of justice* towards all classes, with marked impartiality, is an excellent means. When the disturbers of the public peace are checked, by fines or by imprisonment,—when the perpetrators of crime are punished according to their real demerit measured by standing laws,—when tumultuous assemblages are restrained by the presence of the civil

force, and the fear of the local magistracy,—and when the virtuous members of society are protected in the enjoyment of their unalienable rights, and the pursuit of their respective ends, then unquestionably much is done towards the preservation of this invaluable blessing. Nor is it to be doubted, that even *military force* is eminently useful. When popular tumults cannot be suppressed by gentler means,—when violent outrages continue, despite of strong remonstrances from the magistrates, and vigorous efforts by their official agents,—when the peaceable citizens are exposed to hazards from the rapacity of a starving, or the fury of a fanatical population, then is it meritorious to call in a power adequate to the emergency. Yet I must account that government either very unenlightened or very cruel, that prefers brute force to moral suasion—an energetic police to an extensive scheme of education. Surely it were more rational, humane, and politic, to furnish the citizens with the means of sound instruction, respecting both their rights and their duties, their moral obligations and their political privileges. By cultivating their intellectual faculties,—by strengthening their moral principles,—by pouring into their minds correct views of their origin and destiny, their social duties and true interests—especially by bringing their hearts under the power of that scriptural truth, which has ever proved, when received in love, the most efficient instrument of civilization, virtue and order, they would raise their minds above the grossness of sensual pleasures, the slavery of irregular passions, and the turmoil of riotous proceedings.

"*Wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of the times, and strength of salvation.*"* Is it not matter of regret and wonder, that even in this boasted and boasting nation, they have done so little, compared with their resources, for the true enlightenment of the people,—that they have been fonder of military splendour than of moral grandeur,—that they have been readier to disfigure the face of the country with prisons and bridewells than to adorn it with schools and chapels,—that they have been more eager to lavish *millions* on armies spread over districts to keep down a discontented populace, than to impart hundreds to meritorious teachers labouring, in unmerited neglect, to diffuse around them the choice blessings of knowledge, virtue and happiness? What shall be thought of this fact, in that better age when nations shall convert their murderous weapons into the implements of husbandry, and God "*shall make their officers peace and their exactors righteousness?*"

3. *The intellectual improvement of the community is another important object of government.* Indeed, this is a matter of *fundamental* importance. As the intellect is a prominent part of the mind, as its development in early life prepares for greater activity, happiness and usefulness, in future years, and as the acquisition of various knowledge is attended with immediate pleasure and subsequent advantages, so no wise government will neglect any legitimate means, by which intellectual excellence can be diffused among the people. To see them exercising cultivat-

* Isaiah xxxiii. 6.

ed minds, acquiring useful information, preferring the sublime efforts of the understanding to the inferior gratifications of passion, the splendid creations of genius to the momentary transports of sense, the delights of varied literature to the indulgencies of debasing licentiousness, will ever be an object of paramount importance. But a few, no doubt, can afford leisure sufficient to investigate the hidden truths, and reach the exquisite delights of science; yet all others may, under proper management, obtain that mental cultivation which will exalt them above low pursuits, withdraw them from sensual pleasures, introduce them to the communion of the great minds that have preceded them even in remote ages, and elevate them to the enjoyment of those refined pleasures which offer themselves, in the dreariest hours, and under the greatest disadvantages, from a thousand sources.

By what means, then, shall a paternal government secure to its subjects the advantages, and the pleasures, and the dignities, of intellectual cultivation? To all it is evident the means are various; among which the three following deserve special notice. First, *the institution of schools for the lower classes.* That government should take under its own unlimited control the higher seminaries, in which the useful sciences are taught, I am very far from affirming. This *might* turn out a most disastrous measure, fatal to the required expansion of the intellect, and the further accumulation of knowledge. How often have governments converted into the nurseries of servile maxims and antiquated errors, seminaries from

which, under better treatment, liberal principles and beneficial improvements might have emanated? How often have they obscured the brightest intellects, fettered the finest geniuses, crushed the noblest aspirations, and turned into patrons of narrow views and partial interests, those who, had they been left to themselves, would have been the lights of their abject countrymen, and the propagators of everlasting truth? "But no one will doubt, that it is a noble function to assist and develop the intellect, in those classes of the community whose hard condition exposes them to a merely animal existence." Could revenue be more wisely appropriated than to the erection of elementary schools, and the support of efficient teachers, under suitable conditions? Could a nobler act of justice, humanity and policy, signalize the present reign, than the extension to neglected England, and injured Ireland, of the parochial system which has conferred such important benefits on our own country, since its establishment by our patriotic ancestors?—Again, *the distribution of suitable libraries over the kingdom* would increase the mental improvement of the people. Having acquired the art of reading, they should thus have immediate access to appropriate books, which would enrich them with useful ideas, inspire them with virtuous emotions, exalt them to higher pleasures than they could derive from debasing indulgencies, and arm them with a power of greater utility than they could wield, were their minds wholly uninstructed. Does any haughty aristocrat, with supercilious look, and contemptuous tone, aver, that "this is beneath the dig-

nity of government?" We pity his grievous infatuation—we disregard his selfish arrogance—we repel his stupid allegation. Does not government scatter troops through our chief towns, our peaceful villages, our disturbed districts? Does not government distribute over the land an expensive police, that moves only the selfish feelings, by stern prohibitions, and legal penalties? Does not government employ masked executioners to cut off the heads of misled subjects, betrayed into crimes by the gross ignorance and ferocious passions it has done nothing to remove and subdue? And, what sinks ineffably lower still, does not government squander an immense sum, every year, on grasping aristocrats, whose only title is abject servility, and whose only reward is overbearing insolence? Tell us not, that the enlightenment of the community, by the copious distribution of libraries over the country, is an object beneath the dignity of our rulers. There is scarcely another in the wide circle of their duties, that displays a truer nobleness of mind, a loftier title to the lasting gratitude, admiration, and applause of present and succeeding generations.—In fine, *removing all the restrictions that fetter the powers of the mind, and prevent the dissemination of knowledge*, would farther promote the intellectual improvement of the people. No general measures adopted by government can, of themselves, secure that great object. Government cannot, directly, extend the bounds of knowledge, investigate the truths of science, art, and history, compose new works, or descend to the practical business of the schools. *Individuals* must depend, for

the improvement of their minds, on the exercise of their own faculties, on the various subjects and suitable books within their reach. They must *think*, if they would clear away the vast mass of prejudices that press upon their reason,—*read* if they would appropriate the literary treasures that have been collected by previous inquirers,—and *think again*, if they would reduce to good order the important truths which they have drawn from many opposite directions. Hence the importance of giving the utmost scope to the native energies of their minds, by removing all impolitic restrictions on the press, all taxes on the circulation of knowledge, and all obstructions to the full development of enterprise in the ordinary branches of trade, commerce, and learning.*

* "Few rulers," says a living writer of considerable originality and great independence, "have had the wisdom of *patronising*, in an efficient manner, literature, or of supporting men of genius, and assisting them in the pursuit of their studies; few have perceived the economy of gaining over to their side the mind of the age, as the chiefest, and the easiest, as well as the noblest, road to power. A sum infinitely small when compared with the general expenditure, might far outstrip whatever ancient or modern Mecænases have done in their favour and love of letters; and government itself would be strengthened in the opinion of the public, by conciliating towards it the supporting voice of men of talents, who are not ungrateful, but rather somewhat venal and abundant in their praises. The encouragement of letters and inventions should be considered one of the most imperative duties of policy, an essential part of the kingly character, and the chief spring of national greatness. If a small portion of what has been expended in wars, or even in one campaign, by any one state in Christendom, had been set apart as a literary fund, and merely the interest of it devoted to the attainment of scientific objects, and to the incitement and support of learning, the sciences would have worn a very different face in that country; and its superiority in power, from its superiority in knowledge, would have greatly exceeded in value any acquisition of territory obtained by arms. It is strange, amid the profusion and idle waste of national resources by which so many coun-

4. *The moral improvement of the people* is an object equally deserving of attention from government. No community can prosper, even in their secular pursuits, without respecting morality. It is *this*, producing good order among all ranks, and procuring the divine blessing on all interests, that ensures national prosperity. Allow *this* to suffer corruption uncorrected by efficient remedies, and we may predict, without rashness, the sure decay and total dissolution of society. Even our own country, though defended by its vigorous police, its standing army, and its powerful navy, will not be secured from ruin, should she descend much lower in moral degeneracy. Then her "sun is set for ever, her glory departed, and her history added to the catalogue of the mighty empires which exhibit the instability of all human grandeur, —of empires which, after they rose by virtue to be the admiration of the world, sunk by corruption into obscurity and contempt. If any thing shall then remain of her boasted constitution, it will display munificence in disorder, majestic desolation, Babylon in ruins, where, in the midst of broken arches and fallen

tries are characterised, that so few drops of the scattered showers of plenty have lighted upon science. Had half the energies which have been wasted in mutual destruction, and in spreading wide the desolations of war, been put forth in extorting her secret treasures from nature, and subduing the material world to the service and behest of man, Europe, by this time, would have resembled a garden, and all the rest of the world would have become European. Had only one country devoted itself to the pursuit of knowledge, and sought the aggrandizement of peace in preference to that of the sword, that country would have become the Athens of modern times; and, compared to it, the other nations of Europe but as hordes of barbarians."—*The Advancement of Society in Knowledge and Religion.* By James Douglas, Esq. 151, 152, 154, 155.

columns, posterity will trace the monuments only of our ancient freedom."*

By what means, then, shall virtue or moral excellence be promoted in a country, by its government? Among those which operate beneficially in producing this effect, I may mention the following :—First, *the vigorous repression of crimes by an efficient administration of justice.* If the local magistracies are intelligent, vigilant, and active,—if public offences are punished with due rigour—if the majesty of the law is vindicated by the prompt execution of its annexed penalties, something is done for the future prevention or the partial denunciation of crime. Yet, *that something*, we must beware of exaggerating. Experience in various lands demonstrates what might have been inferred from the ordinary principles of human nature, that no *penal code*, though written in characters of blood, and enforced by monsters of inhumanity, can subdue the turbulent, or reclaim the immoral, soften the obduracy of hardened corruption in the bosoms of aged criminals, or prevent the young, unprivileged with better influences, from pursuing the guilty course which has conducted others, before their eyes, to a disgraceful doom. Other means more rational, more humane, more effectual, must be employed, and will be employed by every government interested in the true welfare of the people, and impressed with their own unceasing responsibility to the Supreme Judge.

One of these means is the promotion of true religion.

* Hall's original preface to his Apology, 14.

To what extent, and under what conditions, government should countenance this sacred object, we do not now inquire: this topic will occur more naturally in the next section. Meanwhile, we assert, that true religion is the most effectual instrument that can ever be applied to the production of good morals in any community. A community that feels its various relations to the Deity, acknowledges his dominion over its diversified proceedings, and offers him required homage from corresponding feelings,—a community of which the individuals are true believers, regenerated by divine influence, imbued with religious affections, governed by scriptural precepts, and animated by the hope of gracious rewards; *such* a community will practise the moral duties with much greater conscientiousness than one that has disclaimed the obligations of religion. This truth, susceptible of enlarged proof from reasoning, from observation, and from history, I am happy to corroborate by appropriate extracts from two documents, valuable on account of important principles which they admit. "Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, *religion*," says President Washington, "*religion* and morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism, who would labour to subvert these great pillars of human happiness, these props of men and citizens. The mere politician, equally with the pious man, ought to respect and to cherish them. A volume could not trace all their connexions with private and public felicity. Let it be simply asked, where is the security for property,

for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation desert the authorities which are the instruments of investigation in courts of justice? *Let us, with caution, indulge the supposition, that morality can be maintained without religion.* Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of a peculiar structure, reason and experience forbid us to expect, that morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principles."* "The idea of a God in the character of a legislator," affirm two French statesmen, "is as essential to the intelligent world, as that of a Creator and first mover of all secondary causes to the physical world. Human laws only restrain the hands, religion regulates the heart; the laws only respect fellow-citizens, religion embraces the human race; the laws are a check on public crimes, religion restrains those that are private. It is religion alone which releases from their fatigues the inhabitants of an immense territory, establishes equality among all ranks, calms every mind, affords a consolation for the inequality of rank, for chagrin and affliction, and calls all men to justice and humanity. It is the interest of government to protect *religious institutions, which are, as it were, the canals through which ideas of order, duty, humanity, and justice, flow through all classes of citizens.* What would morality be, if it remained confined to the lofty regions of science, and without religious institutions to bring it down within the reach of the body of the people? Morality, without religious maxims, would

* Address delivered on resigning the Presidency of the United States of America in 1796.

be like justice without tribunals. Religious morality, which resolves itself into formal precepts, has necessarily a force which no morality purely philosophical can possess."*

Nor should we overlook the beneficial influence *which the virtuous example of rulers would have on the moral improvement of the community.* Mankind are so constituted by the author of their being, that they naturally adopt the opinions, habits, manners, and even eccentricities of their superiors in civil dignity. Without any efforts to estimate their essential character, or to calculate their unavoidable consequences, they often enter the lists of blind and servile imitators. It is on this principle, that the moral character of the rulers exerts such a powerful influence on that of the whole community. When they themselves exemplify virtuous habits in their private practice and domestic relations,—when they carry the principles of eternal rectitude into the management of the public offices with which they are intrusted,—when they spurn from their presence the votaries of licentiousness, whatever rank, riches, or titles they can boast,—and when they encourage, with their countenance, the virtuous part, however humble their station, obscure their birth, or limited their wealth,—it is impossible to calculate the power of that purifying, refining, elevating influence of which they are the source. How important, in relation to this end, is it, that they advance in piety, as well as in liberality,—in moral excellence, as well as

* Concordate between the French Republic and the Pope, discussed on the 5th and 7th April 1802, by M. M. Portalis and Simeon.

in rational jurisprudence? Then should their administrations, instead of corrupting the states over which they extend, advance their moral purity in an unprecedented measure, and their *courts*, instead of reeking with infection that taints the higher classes who approach them, send forth a salutary influence that should descend with renovating energy on all ranks of society.

5. *The physical prosperity of the country is another object government should seek.* In whatever that consists, it is an object of very great importance, as it increases the sum of national happiness, in a ratio modified by the progress which has been made in intellectual, moral, and religious improvement. What rulers of enlightened understandings and patriotic hearts will overlook this? We turn away with indignation from those who make their own happiness the chief object, who enjoy their accumulated luxuries without gratitude, wear their hereditary crowns without fidelity, and sacrifice to their own paltry gratifications, bestowed on their voracious selfishness, the great advantages they ought to confer on their suffering subjects. But we view, with the admiration due to disinterested goodness, those who can prefer to their own private interests the greatest good of the community,—who, instead of ornamenting their lawns, would rather enrich their country with the increasing productions of agriculture,—who, instead of building palaces, would rather construct docks that might facilitate the profitable extension of commerce,—who, instead of lavishing thousands on greedy sinecurists, would rather ex-

pend millions on public works that might augment the national capital, by certain reproduction,—and who, instead of courting the servile adulation of sneaking parasites, would rather receive the humble gratitude, breathed in homely strains, of a happy, loyal, and magnanimous people.

By what means, then, may rulers best promote the temporal prosperity of the kingdoms over which they preside? Without recurring to the consideration of intelligence, virtue, and religion, which are prominent causes of this great effect, I may specify a few others, not already adverted to, by which it would be eminently promoted. The first I mention is, *allowing every man to reap the greatest amount possible of the produce of his own labour.* If a greater deduction be made in the shape of taxes than is necessary to the real exigencies of the government, then is there an undue encroachment on the national wealth. Such encroachment withdraws a proportional amount from the capital employed in the productive industry of the country, and subjects to a corresponding diminution of the means previously possessed for augmenting national felicity. But if, on the other hand, government exacts only the smallest sum possible for defraying its unavoidable expenses,—if it imposes the necessary taxes rather on income than on capital, and rather on luxuries than on necessaries,—if it leaves as large as possible the public capital, that fund which furnishes the means of immediate occupation to the inhabitants, and of future addition to their comforts,—in one word, if it secures to every individual, with the

smallest possible diminution, the varied fruits of his skill, activity, frugality, and capital, under his unrestricted control, then is it contributing, negatively, to the general wealth, the profitable industry, and the temporal prosperity of the kingdom.*

Government would further promote the national prosperity, *by affording the inhabitants the greatest facilities to the exertion of their own powers.* Correctly speaking, it confers very little *direct* benefit. Its office is, not to render us prosperous by immediate control, but to afford us the means of becoming prosperous by our own voluntary efforts. It does not pour money into our pockets, instruction into our minds, purity into our hearts, eloquence into our lips, energy into our hands. It does not till our fields, build our houses, conduct the business of our shops, superintend the operations of our growing factories, or control the unceasing bustle of our immense commerce. The truth is, all these great interests are managed, to the greatest advantage, when they are left to the sagacity, enterprise, industry, and energy of individuals. Individuals, obeying their natural instincts, following their moral principles, and exerting their mental energies in the different pursuits they have chosen, will do more for the public property than folios of parliamentary enactments, and legions of fiscal officers can ever accomplish. *The best policy, in the greater number of cases, is to let them alone.* "Time was,

* The reader, who wishes to see a luminous exposition of these general views, may consult "The Principles of Political Economy," by David Ricardo, Esq. 169-318.

when sovereigns fixed prices and wages, regulated industry and expense, and imagined that a nation would starve and perish if it were not guided and guarded like an infant. But we have learned, that men are their own best guardians, that property is safest under its owner's care, and that, generally speaking, even great enterprises can better be accomplished by the voluntary association of individuals than by the state. Indeed, we are met, at every stage of this discussion, by the truth, that political power is a weak engine compared with *individual* intelligence, virtue, and effort; and we are the more anxious to enforce this truth, because, through an extravagant estimate of government, men are apt to expect from it what they must do for themselves, and to throw upon it the blame which belongs to their own feebleness and improvidence."

If these remarks are well founded, it follows that the physical prosperity of our own country would be greatly advanced by *the gradual abolition of those unjust arrangements that now check the productive industry of individuals.* Suppose for a moment, that the enormous accumulation of wealth in the hands of individuals, which we see in every part of the empire, were gradually diminished by abolishing the law of entails,—that the lucrative branches of commerce which are engrossed by huge monopolies, were thrown open to the latent enterprise and unproductive capital of other classes,—and that the restrictive regulations under which several domestic trades are left to languish, were swept away by the superior enlightenment of modern legislation, it

would be impossible to estimate the fresh stimulus that would thus be given to the principal departments of our industry, or to calculate the ultimate addition that would be made to the productive capital of our land. "In the governments, indeed, of modern Europe, it is much more necessary to abolish old institutions than to introduce new ones; and if this reformation be kept steadily in view, and not pushed farther at any time than circumstances render expedient, or the ideas of the times recommend, the essential principles of a more perfect order of things will gradually establish themselves, without any convulsion."*

6. *The defence of the country from foreign aggression is another important object of government.* Would adjacent states cultivate the arts of peace, with the devotion due to their importance, maintain the friendly relations into which they have entered according to international law, and carry on commercial intercourse on the sound principles of justice, humanity, and reciprocity, the country so treated, as it should exist in perfect security, might devote its attention to domestic improvements. But, when its liberty, or property, or honour is assailed by any of these foreign states, its rulers are bound, by sacred obligations, to use every means of requisite defence. Should they now yield to the seductions of pleasure, or the whisperings of timidity, they would deserve instant deposition and public disgrace. The protection of the soil exposed to pollution, of social liber-

* Stewart's Elements, &c. 264.

ties menaced with violation, of commercial interests suffering under unjust infringements, and of national dignity subjected to outrageous attacks, is an object too sacred to be left in the hands of men who would sacrifice it at the shrine of private pleasure, political corruption, or contemptible cowardice. Let such a trust ever be committed to the guardianship of those who love the land that gave them birth, the institutions under which they have acquired their present consequence, and the community with whom they are connected by ties of a common origin, a common language, and a common interest.

What are the means, then, rulers should employ for defending the country they govern from the violence of foreign aggression? *An excellent precaution they should never fail to use, is the habitual avoidance of provocation.* If they themselves assume a hostile attitude and a menacing tone,—violate the territorial rights and the social privileges of others, how should they expect, that others will feel no resentment, and meditate no retaliation? But, if they cultivate feelings of mutual amity, generosity, and forbearance, perform friendly offices while they secure the national interests, and honour distinguished excellencies in other countries while they are not backward to proclaim those of their own, they may calculate on preventing, to a great extent, all unpleasant ruptures, all disastrous quarrels, all foreign wars. Let them act, in the treatment of other states, on the mild principles of Christianity which have been shown, in a former section, to be applicable to international affairs, and they will, in a great measure,

secure to the community, for whose good they govern, that external peace, for the continuance of which they should make all rational efforts, and suffer all innocent sacrifices.

But, supposing unprovoked aggression proceeds from some neighbouring state, what must our rulers do in this case? Why, in the first instance, they should suppress resentment as a passion equally inconsistent with sound reason, the pacific genius of religion, and the forgiving temper, of which an approved example has been given to all ranks by our Saviour. Next, they should have recourse to negotiation, remonstrance, expostulation, any approved means, in short, that may prevent the dreadful alternative of war, which, rushed into in the fury of unsubdued irritation, would occasion the effusion of blood, the destruction of towns, the depopulation of provinces, and many other horrors, of which a minute enumeration need not now be given. Let them not allege, that a conciliatory course is beneath their official dignity—that an immediate appeal to arms would procure greater eclat. I say decidedly, if they ever rush into hostilities on any account, *before they have tried all possible methods of adjusting the lamented quarrel in an amicable manner*, they are guilty of fearful criminality in the sight of the Supreme Judge, and deserving of immediate impeachment in a court of their peers. What! do they think that the lives of their subjects are of so little value as to be thrown away, with impunity, on their petty quarrels, for the gratification of their paltry resentments? What! do they think it a trifle to tear

thousands from the bosom of their attached families, strew the battle-field with their dead bodies, and convert their wives and children into widows and orphans? What! do they think it nothing to squander the rich resources of the country on destructive wars, to crush the chief springs of industry by oppressive burdens, and to call down the curse of heaven, by the strenuous support of systems which offended deity has threatened to destroy? Too long have there prevailed, in their councils, the unhallowed passions of revenge, pride, vanity, and ambition,—those "lusts from whence come wars and fightings" among their subjects. Why not carry into diplomacy, cabinets, and senates, the humility, the meekness, the forgiveness, and the generosity of Christians, as well as the shrewdness, the intelligence, the force, and the dignity of statesmen? Sure I am such a mode of settling the disputes that arise in their foreign relations would be more honourable to their character, more conducive to the interests of their subjects, and more beneficial to the destinies of the human race placed under their immediate control, than the usual practice of drawing the sword, by which so many ties are severed, so many privileges destroyed, so many sanguinary atrocities perpetrated, and so many heavy calamities entailed.

But supposing all conciliatory measures fail in repelling the aggressor who has presumed to pollute the country with his presence, what must be their next step? Without hesitation I answer, *an appeal to force.* Such force as the community have assigned th em for the due protection of its liberties, they

are to call out, concentrate, and direct against the quarter from which the attack has been made. With valour equal to the discretion with which they have endeavoured to prevent the storm, will they encounter its terrible fury in its first bursting. Faithful to their oaths, and attached to their people, they will preserve the land sacred to the glorious liberties they have been appointed to guard; and foreign slaves shall not enter in, till the body of the last freeman hath filled up the breach. Nor will a virtuous people disobey the summons. "If, after long forbearing, and unavailing applications to justice and humanity, the friends of freedom should be summoned by the voice of God within, and by his providence abroad, to vindicate their rights with other arms, to do a sterner work, to repel despotic force by force, may they not forget, even in this hour of provocation, the spirit which their high calling demands. Let them take the sword with awe, as those on whom a holy function is devolved. Let them regard themselves as ministers and delegates of Him, whose dearest attribute is mercy. Let them not stain their sacred cause by one cruel deed, by the infliction of one needless pang, by shedding, without cause, one drop of human blood."

SECTION VI.

THE ECCLESIASTICAL OBJECTS OF GOVERNMENT.

UNDER this subdivision, it is my design to discuss, within as narrow limits as I can bring the subject, the scriptural connexion between church and state. This subject, interesting at all times to the friends of religion, derives peculiar importance, at the present moment, from a variety of concurring circumstances. When it is considered, that a number of erroneous views have been urged, with extreme keenness, in some recent publications, on both sides of the question,—that the present systems of ecclesiastical polity in several countries are, apparently, drawing near their dissolution, despite the efforts of their interested supporters,—and that the expediency of any future connexion between religion and government, is likely to be agitated, at an early period, with unprecedented spirit, in all societies, from the humblest club to the Imperial Parliament, it surely is the duty of all to have their minds enlightened with correct opinions, their memories furnished with solid argu-

ments, and their hearts imbued with desires flowing in entire accordance with the revealed will of the reigning Redeemer.

That government should withhold protection, and countenance, and support, from true religion, is a sentiment advocated, in modern times, with various ability, by *three classes*;—by *all infidels*,—by *all heretics*,—and by *some Christians*.

A numerous class, from whom this sentiment receives strenuous support, consists of *avowed infidels*. Loudly do such men, whether educated or ignorant, whether wedded to literature or immersed in politics, whether the slaves of gross licentiousness, or the worshippers of human intellect, whether moving in the lower walks of life, or raised to the high places of official power, insist on the entire exclusion of religion from even the lowest place among the cares of civil polity. Nor does it require much sagacity to discover the feeling by which *they* are actuated. It is not *zeal* for the purity of religion, which has been so grossly corrupted by its alliance with antichristian dynasties, and its prostitution to secular politics. It is simply, as their own consciences may whisper in their ears, *hatred* of religion itself,—of those religious doctrines which humble their reasoning pride,—of those religious precepts which condemn their irregular passions,—and of those religious institutions which bring them into communion with a God, whose immaculate purity they dislike, whose supreme authority they spurn, and at whose inflexible justice, thought on in the hours of pensive reflection, they not unfrequently tremble.

Another large class, earnest in advocating the same object, is composed of *avowed heretics. Socinians*, who deny the divinity, the substitution, and the atonement of our Saviour,—*Arians*, who make him a mere creature, altogether inadequate, in our apprehension, to the mighty works ascribed to him in the scriptures,—and several *smaller sects*, who reject some of the vital principles of the Christian system, with insolent contempt, are perfectly unanimous in wishing religion deprived even of the *beneficial* supports which it has received, and abandoned to the unaided resources of its private friends. Eagerly are *they* mustering a host of abuses in the actual establishments against the truth of the abstract principle itself, and contending, in some cases with an energy, an erudition, and an eloquence worthy of a better cause, against that *useful* assistance which religion might obtain from governments *constituted on scriptural principles, and administered by good men.*

Looking at the suspicious views by which these two classes are governed, it is matter of deep regret, that a third party—*friends of the Redeemer*—should have ventured on the same ground which *they* occupy. Yet true it is, not a few, whose private worth we esteem, and whose public usefulness we appreciate, *have* gone over to that unhonoured ground, inlisted under a banner which was first unfurled by deistical hands, and proceeded, in company with allies, whose dangerous tenets they must deplore, and whose ulterior objects they might suspect, to attack a principle which, separated from accidental abuses, and restricted within proper bounds, possesses the

sanction of divine authority, and the promise of universal prevalence. I can easily explain, though I cannot justify, the way in which they have been led to assume this attitude. They have been so shocked at the monstrous abuses that have crept into most of the national churches of which they have read—they have been so grieved at the ruin of millions of immortal souls, through the indolence, the profligacy, and the heresy of many of the clergy,—they have been so indignant at the frequent prostitution of religion, to enslave the minds of mankind, and subserve the interests of their despotic masters—that they have judged a national church, under *any* form, a nuisance which ought to be swept away, and the very principle of magisterial interference on behalf of religion, an error that ought to be exploded. Let them recollect, however, that in examining all established systems of science, or morals, or politics, or religion, much cautious discrimination is requisite, as well as an ardent love of truth. "In the midst of contrary impulses, of fashionable and of vulgar prejudices, he alone evinces the superiority and the strength of his mind, who is able to *disentangle truth from error;* and to oppose the clear conclusions of his own unbiassed faculties, to the united clamours of superstition and of false philosophy. Such are the men whom nature marks out to be the lights of the world; to fix the wavering opinions of the multitude, and to impress their own characters on that of their age."*

* Stewart's Elements, vol. i. 35.

In pleading for the doctrine of magistratical interference on behalf of the gospel, I would deduce my arguments from the two sources to which preceding writers have had recourse—*expediency* and *revelation*. Expediency, when it violates no moral principle, and contradicts no scriptural law, is a perfectly legitimate ground of reasonings in support of any system. For the doctrine just stated, it supplies an argument of considerable force, which may be stated in the three propositions which follow:

1. *The universal diffusion of the gospel over a country is of immense importance to the civil objects of government.* The chief end of this religion, I most readily admit, is the salvation of perishing sinners. It is the eternal happiness of their minds, saved from the penal consequences of sin, restored to an intimate alliance with God, imbued with pure affections, and ushered, on dismissal from their present frames, into the heavenly state. This, *this* is the great end for which religion has been granted to our race in their fallen state; and never, *never* ought this to be placed in the back ground, either by individuals, communities, or governments. The moment you use religion *solely* for inferior purposes,—as an instrument of civilization, or an engine of policy,—that moment she feels herself insulted, degraded, prostituted, "resents the foul indignity, claps her wings, and takes her flight, leaving nothing but a base and sanctimonious hypocrisy in her room." Like the inhabitant of a purer world, her great object in dwelling among men is to rescue them from the ignorance, guilt, corruption, and misery, in which

they are involved; and, when hindered from achieving this by the efficacy of her peculiar principles, she refuses any *humbler* office which mere politicians may assign her, retires from the scene undefiled with mortal touch, and fixes her residence in the bosoms of her own friends, who have discernment, affection, and fidelity enough to appreciate her distinguished excellence. But, while this is the first, highest, noblest object for which she has descended on the earth, there are inferior blessings, most important to the welfare of civil society, and the utility of political government, that she also bestows. How important, for example, is *civilization!* This, to every patriotic magistrate, is of far greater moment than celebrity in arms, or superiority in riches. Yet is there no instrument in existence so effectual in gaining this end, as Christianity. *Conquest* by armies who spread around them superior refinement in manners, customs, and laws,—*philosophy* taught in the ablest manner from the chairs of distinguished universities,—and *arts* introduced with persevering assiduity by learned foreigners, who combine superior skill with unwearied industry, are but feeble instruments of civilization among any people who have not received the gospel. It is *this* which subdues their ferocious passions, and subverts their barbarous usages. It is *this* which elevates their intellectual energies, purifies their social affections, and regulates their bodily appetites. It is *this* which revives the natural sentiments of humanity and benevolence, enforces the important virtues of justice, compassion, temperance, and forgiveness, and "imparts industry,

and trade, and commerce, and literature, and the arts, and those more enlightened views of jurisprudence and morality, which lie at the foundation of national happiness." If, then, rulers are bound to use the most efficient means of carrying the civilization of their subjects to the greatest height attainable, then are they bound to secure the widest diffusion and the ablest administration of religion, to which their resources are adequate.

How important, also, is *morality* to civil society! Without morality, they could have no order, no subordination, no tranquillity, no security against domestic slavery, no defence against foreign aggression. Now, religion is the only parent adequate to produce good morals. *This* renovates the mind, naturally corrupt. *This* purifies and strengthens the moral sentiments no less than the devotional feelings. *This* rouses, from its pernicious sleep, the conscience, which afterwards restrains from vicious practices, by alarming forebodings, and impels to virtuous actions by cheering anticipations. *This* preserves on the soul the impression of God as the Omnipresent Witness, to whom crimes perpetrated in the deepest obscurity are perfectly known,—as the Omnipotent Judge, by whom all actions, with the motives whence they have sprung, " are *weighed*" in the balances of immortal justice. In one word, *this* places on a solid basis the whole fabric of morals, erected in the scriptures by our Redeemer, and supplies a multitude of practical rules, and a class of powerful motives, of which we find no trace even in the purest systems of ethics ever issued from the ancient schools. What

rulers, then, who would raise their people in the scale of moral worth, so essential to every national blessing, would banish from their councils a religion, without which they must struggle, in vain, against the hosts of irregular passions and the remains of demoralizing customs?

How invaluable to civil society is *peace!* There is no sacrifice consistent with justice and honour—no exertion compatible with truth and integrity, that ought to be grudged for the preservation of a public blessing indispensable to the chief ends for which the social union is valuable. But, where shall we find such an effectual means of promoting peace as the general prevalence of Christianity, in its native purity and full power? It is *this* which curbs the fury of those evil passions, ambition, avarice, pride, and revenge, that give rise to unjust wars.* It is *this* which calls into operation the benevolent affections and the tender sympathies, from which spring mutual good-will, forbearance, concord, and peace. It is *this* which teaches nations to repress their mutual jealousies, to bury their mutual wrongs, to cherish universal benevolence instead of that narrow patriotism which degenerates into national illiberality, and like bands of brothers united under the Prince of Peace, to wage an unceasing war *only* against the principles of evil, the common enemy. Let *this* have its due influence in the courts of princes and on the minds of subjects; then the kindlier feelings of humanity will regain their just ascendency, and the usual arts of peace obtain their deserved preference.

* James iv. 1, 2.

Those destructive feuds that throw communities into flames, ere they have recovered from the effects of former contentions, and those selfish intrigues that involve rulers in fresh quarrels, ere they have escaped from the miseries of former breaches, shall all come to an end. Cultivating "*all godliness and honesty*," they will "*lead quiet and peaceable lives.*"* When "*out of Zion shall go forth the law and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem,—they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.*"†

I might illustrate farther the peculiar tendency of religion to promote due subordination to civil rulers, vigorous efforts for the defence of national privileges, universal charity instead of national selfishness, and, in short, all those social affections from which the chief happiness of civil communities arises. But, passing over these topics, which readers can consider at their leisure, I would remind them, that the subserviency of religion to the civil ends of government has been pled by authors of the highest order in the republic of letters. Lord Bacon, for instance, declares, "religion is the chief bond of human society. A king that holds not religion the *best* reason of state, is void of all piety and justice—the supporters of kings! The four pillars of government are *religion*, justice, counsel, and treasure."‡ Hooker affirms, "a *politic use of religion* there is. Men fearing God are, thereby, a great deal more effectually,

* 1 Tim. ii. 2. † Isaiah ii. 3, 4. ‡ Essays, 107, 136, 141.

than by positive laws, restrained from doing evil, inasmuch as those laws have no further power than over our outward actions only; whereas into men's inward cogitations, and into the prime intents and motions of their hearts, religion serveth for a bridle. What more savage, wild, and cruel, than man, if he see himself able, either by fraud to overreach, or by power to overbear, the laws whereunto he should be subject. Wherefore, in so great boldness to offend, it behoveth that the world should be held in awe, not by a vain surmise, but by a true apprehension of somewhat which no man may think himself able to withstand. This is the *politic use* of religion."* "True Christians," says Montesquieu, "being infinitely enlightened with respect to the various duties of life, and having the warmest zeal to fulfil them, must be perfectly sensible of the rights of natural defence. The more they believe themselves indebted to religion, the more they would think due to their country. The principles of Christianity, deeply engraved on the heart, would be infinitely more powerful than the false honour of monarchies, than the humane virtues of republics, or the servile fear of despotic states."† "There are," says Dr. Dewar, "but two instances on record in which *infidelity* widely prevail-

* Eccles. Pol. b. v. sect. 2.

† Spirit of Laws, vol. ii. 150. "The Christian religion is a stranger to mere despotic power. The mildness so frequently recommended in the gospel, is incompatible with the despotic rage with which a prince punishes his subjects, and exercises himself in cruelty. The prince confides in his subjects, and the subjects in the prince. How admirable the religion which, while it seems only to have in view the felicity of the other life, constitutes the happiness of *this!*" Pp. 146, 147.

ed in any states; and in each of these its leaven corrupted the whole mass of the community, and produced a torrent of iniquity that swept away every constituted authority. Its introduction at *Rome*, in union with the speculative dogmas of Epicurus, was soon followed by an extraordinary depravation of morals; and this again was succeeded by scenes of proscription and blood, at which the imagination shudders, and which were terminated only in the destruction of the republic. With the recent attempt to introduce a similar system into *France*, and the barbarities that have resulted from its prevalence," (he is alluding to the *first* revolution) "you are all sufficiently acquainted. You cannot be ignorant that they were accomplished by the activity and talents of men who 'were the avowed enemies of revelation; that in all their writings the diffusion of scepticism and revolutionary principles went hand in hand; that their atrocities were committed with a wanton levity and brutal merriment; that the reign of atheism was expressly the reign of terror; that in the full madness of their career, in the highest climax of their horrors, they shut up the temples of God, abolished his worship, and proclaimed death to be an eternal sleep.'"* "True religion," says Hall, "founded on the sacred oracles, is the pillar of society, the safeguard of nations, the parent of social order—which alone has power to curb the fury of the passions, and secure to every one his rights; to the labourer the rewards of his industry; to the

* Discourses, 299, 300, 301.

rich the enjoyment of their wealth; to nobles the preservation of their honours; and to princes the stability of their thrones."*

2. *The universal prevalence of religion over a country is no less necessary to secure the immortal welfare of the inhabitants.* That this is one of the *direct* objects for which civil magistracy was instituted, I, by no means, insinuate. Its *direct* objects are the assertion of the natural rights of society, the preservation of domestic peace, the repulsion of foreign aggression, with several others of which a brief specification was given in the former chapter. I do not mean, then, that civil rulers should intrude into the internal concerns of the church, or encroach on the essential right of private judgment, or usurp, in any shape, the administration of religious ordinances, for which a distinct order of public teachers has been appointed in the church by Jesus, her sole Head. But I do say, that presiding over a country to which God has, in great mercy, granted the light of revelation, and bound to accomplish the greatest good possible by the diligent use of the superior powers which they have received from him, through the medium of the people, they ought to employ with conscientiousness, every means not forbidden in the Scriptures, by which the immortal beings in their dominions may obtain the blessings of *everlasting happiness*, as their ultimate object. I assign the following reasons.

Unless rulers have respect to the *chief design* of

* See two other quotations in pages 232, 233.

religion, they cannot secure, to any extent, *inferior objects*. Religion, I again repeat, will not endure such an insult as that offered her, when she is valued for nothing else than her temporary advantages. She has come from heaven to turn men from their sins and their miseries, to God the fountain of their immaculate excellence and their unmingled happiness. She has come to train them for the nobler services, the purer pleasures, the brighter honours, the higher immunities of the heavenly kingdom. She has come as a celestial messenger to guide them through this weary wilderness to yonder happy mansions, and to fix them in the everlasting felicities of which they are now animated with the pleasing foretastes. And, let it never be forgotten, that on her "march to immortality," she will not scatter in rich abundance her temporal favours, unless her spiritual blessings are held in due estimation. She will not advance the present good of mankind, in any remarkable degree, unless she becomes "*the power of God unto salvation.*" "Her universal prevalence," it has been well said, "not in name, but in reality, will convert this world into a semi-paradisiacal state; but it is only while it is permitted to prepare its inhabitants for a better. Let her be urged to forget her celestial origin and destiny, to forget that she came from God and returns to God; and, whether she is employed by the artful as the instrument of establishing a spiritual empire and dominion over mankind, or by the philanthropist as the means of promoting their civilization and improvement, she resents the foul indignity, claps her wings, and takes her flight, leaving

nothing but a base and sanctimonious hypocrisy in her room."

Besides, *the immortal welfare* of the inhabitants is an end that surpasses all others in real importance and moral grandeur. What, though our country has acquired an unrivalled portion of riches, power, and renown. What, though our fleets cover the ocean, our armies fill with admiration surrounding kingdoms, and our commerce carry our manufactures to the four quarters of the globe. What, though our constitution secures political privileges greater than those enjoyed in almost any other land, our schools impart literary advantages which even the very poorest children in our population may enjoy, and our universities pour forth, every year, a succession of well-educated youth, who, while they are an honour to their professions, become a benefit to the community. What are all these *temporal* blessings, though they deserve our gratitude to the merciful Ruler of the Universe, from whom they come, viewed in comparison with the *eternal* blessedness of a future state? The time approaches when our lives shall terminate,—when our numerous privileges shall cease,—when our bodies, severed from the spirits they now encompass, shall have mouldered into dust,—our country itself, abandoned to the fire to which it is reserved, shall sink into ashes. But when the whole earth shall have been consumed in one universal blaze, at "nature's funeral pile,"—when the heavens, worn out with age, shall have been rolled together as a scroll, and the bright orbs that stud the immense fields of ether shall have been quenched in

eternal darkness—when the crowns, the thrones, and the sceptres, the palaces, the temples, and the fortresses, for which such costly sacrifices are required, shall have been mingled with the general wreck;—even then the soul saved shall exult in the possession of undecaying youth, rejoice in the fruition of ever-growing happiness, and rest in the delightful assurance, that the pure pleasures accruing from sources inexhaustible, shall continue, in unfading freshness, through an endless succession of ages. "*The redemption of the soul is precious.*" "*What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?*"

Now, why should it be imagined, that an object of such pre-eminent importance as the *future happiness* of a people, should meet with no attention from a civil ruler? That he should arrogate to himself any supremacy over the church, or control her courts in the discharge of their peculiar duties, or propagate her doctrines by compulsory measures, I am very far from wishing. But what should hinder him from providing the requisite means of supporting, in an adequate style, efficient ministers, of sending approved missionaries into all the neglected districts where multitudes are perishing in ignorance, and of instituting, if necessary, theological seminaries, in which an annual succession of well-qualified preachers may be trained for the most *useful* of all functions? Surely, while he commissions judges for the regular administration of justice in all the provinces of his kingdom,—while he despatches consuls to foreign

ports, to watch over the transitory interests of their commerce,—and while he supports, at an enormous expence, thousands of mercenary soldiers, for the protection of their civil privileges, would it be a crime to support, in actual operation, the means requisite to bring within their reach the higher blessings of salvation, and the nobler immunities of heaven? To my mind there cannot be a finer image conceived of a country, than one spacious nursery in which men spend the infancy of their spiritual existence in duties preparatory to an everlasting manhood in the heavens, or one vast temple, in which they offer the acts of spiritual homage, preparatory to a higher service in the celestial sanctuary.

3. Having shewn the paramount importance of the gospel to the growing civilization of a country, and the immortal happiness of the inhabitants, I now remark, that *the requisite diffusion, and the efficient administration of the gospel, cannot be effected, without legal provision.* I admit, the voluntary contributions of private Christians may accomplish a good deal. I admit, the funds collected by voluntary associations may amount to a sum very considerable, compared with the circumstances of many from whom they are received. I admit, in proportion as mankind imbibe the benevolent spirit, enjoy the precious blessings, and obey the moral precepts of Christianity, in the same proportion will they distribute, with a willing mind, of their substance for religious purposes. But, after all these admissions have been made, I must declare, that neither past experience

nor present observation, warrant us to say, that voluntary contributions are adequate, in the actual state of society, either to spread to the requisite extent, or to support, in a proper manner, the religion of Jesus.

Consider, *first of all*, that a much larger sum is necessary than many seem aware, for the religious instruction of a community. There must be furnished accurate translations of the scriptures into the vernacular languages of the inhabitants—a work that requires and deserves the efforts of the most profound linguists that the country has produced, at almost any expense they may demand. There is next, the gratuitous distribution of the Scriptures, after they have been printed, among the hundreds of thousands who are destitute of them—a work rendered necessary by the extreme poverty, or the callous indifference in which they are sunk. There is also the employment of efficient missionaries, who may pass into the unenlightened districts of the land, and proclaim, with the living voice, "*the unsearchable riches of Christ among the Gentiles.*" There is farther, the maintenance of able, learned, and religious ministers, who may devote, to the spiritual interests of their flocks, their whole time, without engaging in any secular employments, and their whole mind, without experiencing any pecuniary difficulties. Now, all these measures, *essential* to the actual prevalence over every country of true religion, good morals, and temporal prosperity, require such an amount as all the sources of private contribution cannot supply, even on the lowest scale, without a

much larger infusion of Christian benevolence than society has ever yet received.

Consider *farther*, that those in any country who are disposed to contribute to the cause of religion, are always a small number, and generally in narrow circumstances. The great majority are persons who have never experienced, in their own hearts, the influences of religion, who have never caught the generous spirit of the compassionate Saviour, who can survey the moral wretchedness of their fellow-men, without feeling one emotion of sympathy, and who can riot in luxuries, without giving one fraction towards their religious improvement. There is, besides, a large class, who, though they attach great value to the gospel, and present some evidence of piety which a charitable mind might deem satisfactory, do yet give only a miserable pittance towards the support of the religion which they profess to esteem, and sometimes even withhold this when they think their sordid selfishness may escape the censures by their more generous brethren. In these circumstances, who are they from whom it is rational to expect pecuniary aid, either for the maintenance or the spread of religion, with its numerous blessings? Most evidently a very small number; scattered through the several churches, placed in humble circumstances, and able to contribute very little, after they have procured, in a competent degree, the temporal comforts to which they are justly entitled.

Consider *still farther*, that that mighty mass of irreligious persons who are found in every country, will make no adequate exertions to procure religion

to themselves. Place within their reach a branch of secular literature, that may gratify their natural curiosity, or flatter their intellectual vanity, they will, probably, make some efforts, that they may hear the lectures delivered, and purchase the books published, on the subject. Recommend to them a new invention by which they may increase the productiveness of labour in their mercantile establishments, and enhance the profits they draw on their capitals, they will listen to you with evident pleasure, and incur the requisite outlay for the sake of greater accumulation. In short, whatever *physical* objects are agreeable to their *natural* desires, they will readily procure to the utmost extent of their pecuniary resources. But it is otherwise with Christianity, which is addressed to their intellectual, moral, and religious necessities. Christianity, though necessary to their best interests in every stage of their existence, is not an object of desire, of estimation, or of pursuit. It is rather an object of aversion, inherent in their unrenewed minds, and manifest in their habitual behaviour; both because it reproves the evil passions and the irreligious habits they indulge, and because it prescribes doctrinal articles and devotional duties which they dislike. Hence their very natural reluctance to make the smallest sacrifices, or to use the smallest exertions, to supply themselves with the stated administration of religious ordinances. And must they be left to perish? Perish they must, unless "*the gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth,*" is carried to them by means of legal provision awarded from the national

property. And can national wealth, I would ask, be put to a better use than spreading abroad that religion which, on its "march to immortality," scatters over the land the seeds of civilization, raises society to a state of improvement, refinement, and happiness, which the ablest politicians have never produced by any other means, and trains myriads of immortal minds for exalted pleasures in that "better country" which shall survive all earthly kingdoms?

Perhaps it will be said, that *after the gospel has been introduced into a country*, it will receive adequate support from the sources of its private friends. Now, I readily admit, that when the gospel has been spread *very extensively* over a country, a greater amount will be contributed to its support than was ever given before; because the number of those whose souls have experienced its value, and in the deep recesses of whose penitent minds every good cause finds unshaken support, shall have been greatly increased. I also admit, that when the predicted triumph of truth, and virtue, and benevolence, over error, and vice, and selfishness, shall have arrived in the era of the millennium, the church *may* possess sufficient wealth and sufficient generosity to provide, without any legislative aid, for the due support of religious teachers in the manner in which they deserve to live. But that is not the question. The question is, looking at the *present* condition of society even in those countries in which Christianity has obtained the widest prevalence and the greatest influence, are we warranted to argue, that all their religious wants would be adequately supplied by vo-

luntary contributions? I affirm, without the smallest hesitation, we have not that warrant; and, for an appropriate example of experimental proof, I refer, with perfect confidence, to the United States of America. In that country, where the voluntary principle has had ample room to develop itself during these fifty years—where the springs of benevolence have never been weighed down by the burdens of an ecclesiastical establishment,—and where the private resources of the inhabitants, increasing with unparalleled rapidity, have never been drained away by swarms of paupers, moving like locusts over the land,—even in *that* country, I ask, has the *voluntary* provision made for the religious improvement, kept pace with the rapid increase, of the population? Far, very far from it. "In the year 1800," says Dr. Dwight in his Travels, "there were in Connecticut 251,002 inhabitants, with 194 ministers"—that is, every 1293 inhabitants enjoyed the services of a minister in that part of the Union where the state provided for the support of religion. Nor were these ministers idlers. "It is doubted," continues Dwight, "whether there is a collection of ministers in the world, whose labours have been more prosperous, or under whose preaching a greater proportion of those who heard them have become the subjects of real piety. I know of no country in which revivals of religion have been so frequent, or, in proportion to the number of inhabitants, so extensive as in these states. God, therefore, may be considered as having thus far manifested his own approbation of the system. If, at the same time, we advert to the peace, the good

order, the general distribution of justice, the universal existence of schools, the universal enjoyment of the education they communicate, and the extension of superior education, it will be difficult for a sober man not to perceive, that the smiles of Heaven have regularly accompanied this system from its commencement to the present time." On the other hand, in the states south of New England, at the same period, were 4,033,775 inhabitants, with 275 ministers,—that is, there was about one minister to every 14,668 persons. "If these states," says Dwight, "maintained congregations, and were supplied with ministers in the same proportion as Connecticut, the whole number of ministers settled and supported would be 3024," instead of 275. "In this estimate we have a fair specimen of the natural consequences of *establishing*, or *neglecting* to establish, the public worship of God by the law of the land. In Connecticut every inhabitant who is not precluded by disease or inclination, may hear the gospel, and celebrate the public worship of God, every Sabbath day. In the states specified, it is not improbable that a number of people, several times as great as the census of Connecticut, *have scarcely heard a sermon or a prayer in their lives.*"

"We find," says the British Review,* proceeding on the calculations made by *Dr. Beecher a very few years ago*, "we find a statement, which affords the melancholy intelligence that, out of eight millions, the computed amount of the American people, *five*

* No. XXVI. 513—515.

millions of persons are destitute of competent religious instruction. Setting out upon the assumption, that there ought to be a clergyman for every thousand souls, Dr. Beecher assures us that in Massachusets there is a deficiency of one hundred and sixty-eight competent religious teachers. In Maine, not more than one-half of the population is supplied with religious instruction. In New Hampshire the deficiency is one-third. Varmont is nearly in the same situation. In the western part of Rhode Island, embracing a territory of fifty miles in length, and thirty in breadth, and including one-half of the population, there is but *one* regularly educated minister, and but ten in the other parts. In Connecticut there are 218 congregational churches, of which thirty-six are vacant. In New York the actual number of pastors is about 500; the population of a million would require double the number. In New Jersey there is a deficiency of at least fifty pastors. Virginia, with a population of 974,000, has but sixty regular ministers; consequently 914,000 persons are without adequate religious instruction. The situation of Maryland is similar to that of Virginia. North Carolina, with a population of 555,500, which would require 550 clergymen, has but twenty. South Carolina, which, with a population of upwards of 400,000, ought to have 400 pastors, has but thirty-six. The state of Georgia has but ten clergymen. So much in proof of the maxim, that religion being one of the natural wants of the human mind, 'requires no aid from the magistrate in an enlightened age.'"

"Need we wonder," says one of the *keenest*

writers on the other side, "that such a people should be in want of religious instructions? Need we wonder that all their theological seminaries, numerous as they are, and well as they are frequented, generally speaking, should be quite at a loss to furnish the requisite supply? Only consider, that three hundred thousand," the estimated number added every year to the adult population, "at the rate of one minister to a thousand persons, would take *three hundred* ministers, or, at the rate of one to five hundred persons, which, taking into account their scattered state, is greatly less than they must need, would take *six hundred* ministers. Six hundred ministers annually, besides what are needed to supply the ordinary deficiency occasioned by death, and old age, and other causes, in the already settled territory, how can all the churches furnish so many? How can all the schools of theology educate and send out so many? The energy which should accomplish such an achievement, and continue accomplishing it from year to year, would be next to miraculous. Need we be surprised, then, if those, who send us home accounts of that country, should have it in their power to say, that the ministers of religion are few, that there is a great deficiency of religious instruction, and that large tracts in various places are but scantily provided with the means of grace?"*

* Marshall's Ecclesiastical Establishments further considered, pp. 262, 263.

I might have quoted other testimonies, from which I select the following by the Rev. Samuel J. Mills: "Never will the impression be erased from our hearts, that has been made by beholding those scenes of

Having illustrated the argument from *expediency* for magistratical interference on behalf of religion, I now proceed to state several proofs still more satisfactory, with which we meet in the volume of revelation.

1. *Revelation prescribes a variety of general principles, which afford a strong presumption in favour of this doctrine.* From the series which might have been brought forward in this place, take the following selection.

Revelation requires, that all men, in whatever stations they exist, should exert themselves to the utmost extent of their powers, in *promoting the glory of God.* Whether they are employed in devotional services, or in moral duties,—whether they are enjoying animal gratifications or intellectual pleasures, —whether they are receiving the privileges of citizenship, or those of ecclesiastical fellowship, they are bound, by the highest authority, to keep this end prominently, principally, and habitually before their minds, "*Whether ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.*"* But, how can magistrates be said to act for the honour of God, in the highest degree to which they are adequate, if they

wide-spreading desolation. The whole country, from Lake Erie to the gulf of Mexico, is as the valley of the shadow of death. This vast country contains more than a million of inhabitants. Yet there are, at present, only a little more than one hundred Presbyterian or Congregational ministers in it. Were these ministers equally distributed throughout the country, there would *be only one to every ten thousand people.* But, now there are districts of country, containing from twenty to fifty thousand inhabitants, *entirely destitute.*"

* 1 Cor. x. 31.

put away from their councils all concern about the true religion in their dominions—that religion, in which he has given the brightest display of his moral perfections that the intelligent creation shall ever behold—that religion, by the actual diffusion of which over the earth, he will secure to himself a greater tribute of praise than arises from the whole universe—that religion, by the saving influence of which on the minds of sinners, he will fill heaven with brighter monuments than are the highest angels. If, therefore, they would indulge the pure ambition of achieving this greatest of all results, to the utmost extent which their peculiar capabilities can reach, they will neglect no measures, adapted to effect the widest diffusion of the gospel over their kingdoms, and the ablest dispensation of the ordinances which have been instituted for the salvation of perishing immortals.

Revelation further demands, that the civil ruler should strive to accomplish the *greatest amount of good* among his people. But, how shall he be able to do this, if he must not supply them with the means of acquiring the highest species of good they are capable of possessing, *religious excellence?* If all his efforts must be employed, and all his treasures expended, for promoting their secular interests,—if he must provide no efficient means of securing that spiritual improvement which shall survive all their outward accomplishments, and that future happiness compared with which their greatest pleasures on earth vanish into insignificance, how can he be regarded as the *minister of God for good*, in the

highest sense of that unrivalled character? Why, all the good to which he contributes by his great influence, his ample resources, and his *peculiar* capabilities, is of inferior nature, and of brief duration; whereas the good which he neglects in his public character, is of the very highest excellence that the human mind can receive, and of a continuance commensurate with the ages of eternity.

Revelation also demands, that all *kinds of authority* should be exerted, for the promotion of religion, by proper means, among those over whom it is extended. *Parents*, for example, have authority over their children; and it is their duty to furnish *them* with the means of acquiring religious knowledge in the exercise of their own judgments, and of securing eternal happiness by their personal acceptance of the Saviour. *Husbands* have authority over their wives; and it is their duty to promote their religious improvement with the most assiduous attention, by maintaining domestic worship, recommending useful reading, and exemplifying private devotion. *Masters* have authority over their servants; and it is their duty to take a lively interest in their spiritual welfare, by giving them suitable instruction, allowing them leisure for religious duties, and exciting them to "*serve the Lord Christ, knowing that of the Lord they shall receive the reward of the inheritance.*" And *must* civil rulers, who have received authority over their people, provide no means by which *they* may be delivered from the greatest evils, and advanced to the highest privileges? Must they, with all the revenues poured into the treasury, and all the facilities they

have of doing good wherever their power prevails, decline making one effort, in their official capacity, for the better interests of the immortal beings under their control? That were an unaccountable anomaly. That were to alienate the divine institution of magistracy from one of its noblest objects, to employ their authority only about objects of inferior moment, and to waste the golden opportunities which occur in their lives of effecting good, not only of incalculable importance, but of eternal duration. "To exclude the interests of religion from the councils of a nation, or for a king to withhold the exercise of his official influence when it might be employed for the advancement of his authority, were an ungrateful and atheistic use of his authority. *This*, instead of laying as an oblation upon the altar, and consecrating the nation to him who is the author of our civil as well as of our domestic and private happiness, would be to erect the superstructure of governments on the basis of infidelity,—it would be to lay the foundation-stone of the social edifice, without invoking the presence of that Supreme Architect, without whose aid the builders of the house build in vain." *

Revelation also declares, as a general principle, *that all things have been put under the authority of the Mediator for the* BENEFIT *of the* CHURCH. Survey you the human race spread over many lands in greatly diversified circumstances, they are all placed under him, "*that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given him.*"† Look you to the ir-

* Defence of Ecclesiastical Establishments, 81. † John xvii. 2.

rational tribes abounding in every region to which the human eye turns; they are all subjected to his control, for the sake of "a virtuous race to godliness devote," for whose advantage they were originally framed.* See you the splendid hierarchy of angels rejoicing in the heavenly temple from which they have never fallen; they, too, are all subjected to him, not merely that they may offer him all divine honours, which they unceasingly do, but that they may act under him as "*ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation.*"† In short, "*the Father hath set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and hath put all things under his feet, and given him to be the Head over all things to the church.*"‡ And shall any presume to say, that *magistrates* are excepted in this universal grant, without presuming largely on the ignorance, or the credulity, or the stupidity of their readers? And, if it be once granted that they are *included*, a fact most unquestionable from numerous passages of scripture, does it not follow, that the "church of Christ" is the leading object *about* which their efforts should be employed, under the direction of Him in whose name they reign—an object to the promotion of which, the whole system of nature and the vast machinery of Providence are, in various ways, subservient?

* Psal. viii. 5, 8. † Heb. i. 14. ‡ Ephes. i. 21, 22.

2. *Revelation teaches this doctrine by the approved example of Jewish kings.* Had the pious rulers of the first nation, to whom God imparted revealed religion, refrained from using their power on its behalf, this circumstance would have been a powerful objection to the probability of the doctrine for which I am now contending. But, what is the fact? The fact is, that in all ages, from the commencement of that kingdom to its dissolution, they were most active in applying their unceasing efforts, in their official character, to its advancement. No general purification of the sanctuary was ever effected, no extensive revival of piety was ever produced, and no vigorous administration of religious ordinances was ever given by the several orders of the priesthood, without their cordial concurrence and strenuous cooperation in the appropriate measures which were adopted under the divine direction. Need I specify, as instances, Moses and Joshua, David and Solomon, Asa and Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah and Josiah, with several others, whose official support, given to the true religion, in their respective reigns, was crowned with such remarkable success, and whose venerated names, hallowed in the grateful recollections of succeeding generations, have been enrolled in an imperishable record?

It is most evident, too, that *their* official interference on behalf of religion, drew forth from God *unequivocal proofs of his high approbation.* Never did any class of rulers stand so high in his favour, or receive so many tokens of his regard. The more they contributed, by their various exertions, to the spread

of the sacred writings, to the excitement of the national priesthood, and the prevalence of vital godliness, in its purifying, refining, and elevating influence over the land, the greater was the success with which they were honoured of God, in securing the civil objects of their government. See how morality, the daughter of religion, recovered her proper attitude, raised her instructive voice, and frowned from the country troops of vices that had before wasted its best fruits, and threatened its political existence. See how order, and peace, and liberty, and prosperity, the natural progeny of morality, revisited the land in unwonted abundance, and enriched the people with innumerable blessings. And after all this has been recorded in sacred history, which even the most learned are not exempted from the duty of studying, shall we believe, that the principle upon which they acted—*giving official support to religion*—was one of palpable *injustice*, unless it had been sanctioned by the Almighty? No; *we* cannot entertain such a dishonouring thought of that Being, who is "*just in all his ways, and holy in all his works.*" *We* cannot impute to Him, under any possible economy, the sanctioning of a principle inconsistent with essential justice, or with the moral constitution which he has conferred on man. *Our* conceptions of his character, from the moment we were capable of turning our thoughts to this subject, have ever led us to believe, that *even He* cannot command any course of proceeding that is in itself unjust,—that *even He* cannot infringe on the proper rights of rational creatures in a manner that involves the slightest injustice,

—that *even He*, whose immutable rectitude forms the rule of all his acts, is bound to refrain from the remotest approach to injustice. Our feelings revolt from the picture drawn by some, when they represent him as acting on the dictates of absolute sovereignty—as impressing the stamp of virtue on deeds which, without his arbitrary fiat, must have worn the character of vicious,—as challenging our warmest approbation of actions which, without his arbitrary appointment, must have roused our deepest abhorrence by their inherent turpitude. If, then, the exercise of magisterial authority in religious matters were in itself *unjust*,* we are constrained to hold, that it never could have obtained the sanction of his approbation, or the promise of his blessing, even among the peculiar people whom he had placed in Canaan, and in the theocratic government under which they lived.

* I cannot help feeling, that a number of writers have hazarded language, respecting the Jewish establishment of religion, which no system admitted to have come from God, *can* deserve. It has been called—"manifestly unjust,"—"intolerant,"—"irreconcilable with the natural and inalienable freedom of the human mind,"—without the appointment of God. I cannot afford space here to examine this subject with the minuteness which it requires; but I must say, that if God possesses the immaculate rectitude which all agree in ascribing to him, even *He could not* sanction, by his appointment, for the shortest period, in any country, a system inconsistent with the proper rights of mankind, and the essential principles of justice. The truth is—and it is a truth which some theologians seem not to have yet learned—that it is *perfectly just in God* to restrict the natural freedom of the mind—to prescribe the religious *opinions* man should adopt, no less than the religious observances he should keep—and to punish for the adoption of erroneous views, no less than for the perpetration of wicked actions. Is not *every part* of man subject to his authority?

But passing this topic, the question occurs, has this principle, after having been sanctioned in the only nation for which the Deity was pleased immediately to legislate, been done away with that nation? That all the principles peculiar to the singular polity under which that people were placed,—all the laws founded on arbitrary arrangements, and adapted to temporary purposes,—have been annulled, is most readily admitted. But, that all the support which the church should receive from government has ceased with the Jewish monarchy,—that, from that date, the church should be abandoned to her own private resources, unaided by legislative provision,—that Christianity, though the parent of good morals and the treasury of spiritual blessings, should be put on the same footing with even the worst superstitions that ever sent their withering influences over the earth,—these are views to which I cannot assent, without more conclusive evidence of their truth than has yet been produced. To the opposite principle my attachment grows, the more I turn the subject over in my mind,—a principle sanctioned by the Almighty himself, whenever he had planted his church in a particular country,—a principle, the required exemplifications of which were crowned with success under the smiles of his gracious countenance,—a principle, the uninterrupted continuance of which, in all lands into which the true religion comes, would contribute so eminently to its general settlement and adequate support.

No doubt, it has been objected to the argument drawn from the approved practice of the Jewish

kings, that *the office they filled was typical of that which our Saviour has received as king, and was, consequently, done away in that hour when the Mosaic ritual was wholly abolished.* Now, that the Jewish kings were types of the promised Messiah in his kingly character, is a fact so evident from the briefest inspection of the Scriptures, that none have ever denied it. But, that *the office* they filled has been wholly done away in Christ since he came into our world, is an assumption proved to be rash, by the false and absurd consequences to which it necessarily leads. From this assumption it follows, 1*st*, that *even the political duties of the kingly office have been abolished.* If the office *itself* has been done away according to the assumption so often repeated,* then *all* the duties which are annexed to this office among the Jews have come to an end. Not only those which related to the church, but those also which related to the *state*, must have ceased from the moment the antitype appeared. If you remove the *whole* foundation of a building having two apartments, must not *both* fall into ruins? If you cut down the *whole* trunk of a tree having two branches, must not *both* die? If you drain away, under ground, a whole fountain which has hitherto sent forth two streams, must not *both* disappear? And, in like manner, if you assume that the whole office of the Jewish rulers was done away in the incarnation of the Saviour,

* "Who, then, does not see that *the office* of the Jewish kings has transpired?"—"an office which could exist only till the coming of Christ in the flesh, and which is now virtually sustained by him."—*Marshall's Ecclesiastical Establishments*, 78, 79.

must not the political duties as well as the ecclesiastical ones annexed to it have ceased from that moment? Henceforth, according to that theory, there should have been *no administration of justice* to all classes of the subjects respecting their property, their liberty, their character, their life,—*no preservation of peace*, by suppressing the internal feuds and preventing the foreign aggressions out of which wars spring, —*no organization of armies* for keeping down turbulent citizens whom rational means could not restrain, or resisting neighbouring states, which justice could not govern,—nor any other of the *civil* ends for which the royal office was instituted; for the office has passed away with the other types of the ancient economy, and has been assumed entirely by the Lord Jesus, king over all the earth! But, 2*d*, we deny, that the kingly office has been done away by the coming of our Redeemer. It is, indeed, a truth, a glorious truth, that his vicarious sufferings have been rewarded with his exaltation to the office of king,—king not only of the church, but of nations. With confidence and joy, we behold him on the throne of the universe, receiving divine honours from all classes of his subjects, and controlling, with resistless energy, the affairs of human kingdoms. But he does not govern *them* by his *immediate* agency. Under his own superintendence he employs subordinate rulers,—civil magistrates, who, whatever *names* they assume, fulfil the substantial duties of the kingly office, and who, whatever *form* of government they may adopt, are recognised in the New Testament as approved rulers, to whose commands conscientious obedience is en-

joined, and for whose success appropriate prayers should be offered. How, then, can it be affirmed, that the office of the Jewish kings has been done away? True; the individuals who held that office, with various success, in the Jewish commonwealth, have been removed; but the office itself, divested of the peculiarities associated with it for temporary objects, has been retained a standing ordinance during all the ages that human beings shall remain on the earth,—a permanent source of important advantages, which they could never derive, in the smallest measure, either from solitude or from anarchy. *3d*, We must add, that the principle for which we contend, when duly limited, rests on moral grounds. That magistrates should use their power for promoting the worship of God in their dominions, by all the legitimate measures they can employ, seems to be one of the first dictates of morality. The obligation to do this results from the moral relations in which they stand to him,—from the moral principles with which they have been endowed,—and from the moral purposes for which they have been intrusted with the civil office they fill. That they should hold such an office over communities of rational beings, without providing for the due support of his worship, which deserves the precedence of all other objects that fall within their jurisdiction, is surely an outrage on morality, as well as an insult to religion. Instead, then, of placing this duty among the temporary enactments which were given to the Jews for local purposes, and which were repealed at the end of their peculiar dispensation, we are constrained to

assign it much higher ground, tracing it to that moral rectitude of God which entitles him to the highest homage of his rational creatures in every character, and to his unrivalled supremacy, from which not even the most exalted potentates can plead exemption.

3. Revelation inculcates this principle *by the approved interference of heathen rulers on behalf of the true religion.* View the Jews carried into captivity in Chaldea on account of their national iniquities; they are not left always without magistratical support being provided for their church. When the period drew near that was fixed in prophecy for their restoration, we find Cyrus, under whose authority they were, "*stirred up, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying,—'The Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the Lord God of Israel, which is in Jerusalem. And whosoever remaineth in any place where he sojourneth, let the men of his place help him with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts, besides the free-will offering for the house of God that is in Jerusalem. And also, let the golden and silver vessels of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took forth out of the temple which is at Jerusalem, and brought unto Babylon, be restored and brought again to the temple which is at*

Jerusalem, every one to his place, and place them in the house of God.' "* We also find, a short time afterwards, when the Jews were hindered by force, in consequence of an unrighteous order, from carrying forward the rebuilding of the temple, Darius publishing an edict, from which they derived important advantages. "*Moreover*," says he, "*I make a decree, what ye shall do to the elders of these Jews, for the building of this house of God; that of the king's goods, even of the tribute beyond the river, forthwith expenses be given unto these men, that they be not hindered. And that which they have need of, both young bullocks, and rams, and lambs, for the burnt-offerings of the God of heaven, wheat, salt, wine, and oil, according to the appointment of the priests which are at Jerusalem,—let it be given them, day by day, without fail. And the God that hath caused his name to dwell there, destroy all kings and people that shall put to their hand to alter and to destroy this house of God which is at Jerusalem.*"† Nor must we overlook the subsequent decrees of another Persian prince, Artaxexres, who acted on the same principle. "*I make a decree*," says he to Ezra the priest, "*that all they of the people of Israel, and of his priests and Levites in my realm, who are minded, of their own free-will, to go up to Jerusalem, go with thee. Forasmuch as thou art sent of the king, and of his seven counsellors, to inquire concerning Judah and Jerusalem, according to the law of thy God which is*

* Ezra i. 1, 2, 3, 4, with vi. 5.

† Ezra vi. 8, 9, 12.

*in thine hand; and to carry the silver and gold, which the king and his counsellors have freely offered unto the God of Israel, whose habitation is in Jerusalem, and all the silver and gold that thou canst find in all the province of Babylon, with the free-will offering of the people, and of the priests, offering willingly for the house of their God. And I, even I Artaxerxes the king, do make a decree to all the treasurers which are beyond the river, that whatsoever Ezra the priest, the scribe of the law of the God of heaven, shall require of you, it be done speedily; unto an hundred talents of silver, and to an hundred measures of wheat, and to an hundred baths of wine, and to an hundred baths of oil, and salt, without prescribing how much. Whatsoever is commanded by the God of heaven, let it be diligently done, for the house of the God of heaven; for why should there be wrath against the realm of the king and his sons?"**

Now, such are approved interpositions, by heathen rulers, on behalf of the ancient church. That these interpositions were afforded in extraordinary circumstances, and cannot be erected into patterns for imitation in ordinary cases, is readily admitted; but that *they recognise the general principle* for which we are contending, is equally evident, as the following remarks may more particularly show:—1st, *Here is the church of God receiving legal assistance from the state of Chaldea according to her present necessities.* A royal license is granted her members

* Ezra vii. 13, 14, 15, 16, 21, 22, 23.

to quit their temporary servitude in that country, and return to the original privileges of their own land. A royal edict is issued, requiring that they be furnished with adequate contributions, both of money for rebuilding the house of God in Jerusalem, and of cattle for offering the typical sacrifices which their ritual prescribed. Another edict follows, enjoining that they be protected from the attacks of those adversaries who viewed their restoration with jealousy, and supplied with additional contributions that might be requisite for completing the sacred edifice they had begun, and maintaining the public service of God, "*according to the appointment of the priests.*" A third edict is despatched "*to all the treasurers beyond the river,*" demanding that they give, without delay, "*whatsoever Ezra the priest shall require*" for the due support of revealed religion in all its public institutions, and that they exempt from the taxes imposed on other classes, all those who are employed in the public service of the sanctuary.* 2d, *Observe, that the rulers who issue such orders are heathen rulers.* When we have referred to the approved practice of the Jewish kings supporting the true religion, we are immediately told by our opponents, *that* was a mere peculiarity that has died away with the Jewish theocracy—a temporary favour that has ceased with the Jewish ritual. Well, what will they say to this exercise of magistratical authority on behalf of religion, by *heathen* kings? Will they call *this* Jewish? Will they

* Ezra vii. 24.

invest *this* with a typical character, and assign *this* a temporary duration? No. These kings, though they had obtained dominion over Judea, which their predecessors had conquered, were not Jews. They had not their power in virtue of the Jewish constitution; nor did they perform their duties according to the Jewish code. On the contrary, they were *Gentiles*, occupying thrones in countries into which the provisions of the Jewish law had never been carried, and acting on the principles of nature, aided only by the scanty remains of oral tradition;—and yet do we see *them* exerting their official power for the good of the church planted in one of their provinces. Is not this a sort of intimation, that in *all countries* whatever into which the religion of the Bible is introduced, and in *all ages* during which the church shall continue in this world, kings do nothing wrong when, "*after the will of God*,"* they order such contributions to be levied as are necessary to the proper maintenance of his worship and the efficient administration of his religion? 3d, Observe again, that *these heathen rulers did all this good under the immediate guidance of God himself.* The measures they took did not originate in their natural sagacity, or in their ambitious views. Had they listened to the suggestions of their own minds before they were prompted by supernatural influence, they would never have countenanced an enslaved people whom they despised, nor promoted a pure religion which they disliked. Accordingly, whatever steps they took

* Ezra vii. 18.

on behalf of the Jews, emancipating them from captivity, or providing them with external protection, or supplying them with pecuniary contributions, were all presented to their minds by that *common influence* of God which prompts even wicked men to the performance of externally good actions. Though they were perfectly voluntary, as became moral agents accountable for all their actions, they were *his* moral deputies, executing his gracious purposes according to his revealed commands. May we not infer, then, that magistratical interference in support of religion in all heathen lands into which it is introduced, is a principle consonant to the dictates of his eternal rectitude, and the principles of his universal government? 4. *Observe further, that the measures adopted in favour of the church, by these Persian princes, were crowned with distinguished success.* In perusing the lives of the pious kings of Judah, who has not been struck with the happy effects that resulted from their efforts on behalf of true religion—such as the diminution of idolatry, irreligion, and vice,—the increase of piety, virtue, and knowledge,—and the return of prosperity in all the lawful pursuits in which the nation engaged? Now, similar advantages, on an inferior scale, flow from the approved interferences of these heathen princes acting under the immediate direction of God. "*Then, the elders of the Jews builded, and they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo; and they builded and finished it, according to the commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the commandment of Cyrus, and*

*Darius, and Artaxerxes king of Persia. And the children of Israel, the priests and the Levites, and the rest of the children of the captivity, kept the dedication of this house of God with joy; and all such as had separated themselves unto them from the filthiness of the heathen of the land to seek the Lord God of Israel, did eat the passover, and kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days with joy: for the Lord had made them joyful, and turned the heart of the king of Assyria unto them, to strengthen their hands in the work of the house of God, the God of Israel."** Who, then, can doubt the utility of Christian magistrates, in all countries, using their best efforts, according to the divine law, in supporting religion throughout their dominions? "It is the interest of princes and great men," says Henry on the passage, "to use their wealth and power for the support and encouragement of religion. What else are great revenues good for, but that they enable men to do much good of this kind, if they have but hearts to do it? The neglect and contempt of religion bring the judgments of God upon kings and kingdoms; and the likeliest expedient to turn away his wrath, when it is ready to break out against a people, is, to support and encourage religion." "Did kings know their true interests, even in this world," says Scott on the same passage, "they would support the worship of God, and give liberty and protection to his people; that acceptable services might be rendered to his name, throughout their dominions. When he turns the

* Ezra vi. 14, 16, 21, 22.

hearts of princes, to strengthen the hands of his servants in their work; inveterate enemies will be overawed; indifferent persons will become helpers; the commandment of the king will be regulated by the commandment of God; and good designs, that had been long interrupted, will be speedily completed."

4. *Revelation corroborates this principle by a number of appropriate predictions.* Had revelation presented nothing else on the subject than these predictions, it would have been difficult to resist the impression they alone produce, that the church under the Christian economy should enjoy, in some form or other, magistratical support. Is not *this* the impression made on the unprejudiced mind by the simple reading of such passages as foretell, that kings shall bring presents to the Messiah for the use of his church in her brightest days—that they shall prove her nursing fathers when the multitudes of the Gentiles shall have been converted—that they shall minister to her of their silver and their gold produced in their respective countries? How much stronger then must this impression become, when we consider these predictions in connexion with the scriptural proofs already adduced, and remember that the great privilege they promise is a privilege which the church had enjoyed from the commencement to the dissolution of the Jewish empire, especially in those seasons during which she rose to the greatest purity, power, and prosperity.

I am aware, an attempt has been made to set aside the argument drawn from this source, by saying "that prophecy is no rule of conduct either for go-

vernments or individuals—that if Christian princes, in establishing Christianity, look to prophecy as a rule, even allowing them to do what is right in itself, they do it on wrong principles."* But, is it a fact, as the objection insinuates, that the advocates of magistratical support to religion refer to prophecy as *the rule* that should guide Christian princes? No; they do no such thing. "*Half-instructed*" as they are, compared with the unrivalled intelligence of their boasting reviler, they know perfectly well, that the rule of conduct prescribed for every Christian prince is the *law* of God. This it is which constitutes the standard of moral duty, which expresses the authoritative requirement of the divine will, and which creates obligations to the performance of his official duties which he cannot oppose with impunity. When they refer to prophecy, they do so merely as affording *additional corroboration* of a principle previously ascertained from other sources of scriptural testimony—as collateral proof of a duty previously enjoined by that law to which all magistrates owe unreserved obedience. And is it *illogical* to argue from prophecy in this way? It has never been considered so before in other cases. For example, that it is the duty of all Christians to use the means competent to them, in their respective stations, of spreading the gospel over unenlightened lands, is easily deduced from the *divine law*—the rule of their conduct. But we do not, usually, confine them to this. We are accustomed, with perfect propriety,

* Marshall's Eccles. Estab. 88.

to direct them to *prophecy*, as declaring the fact, that the gospel shall be diffused over all lands by human agency, as confirming them in the belief that they have done nothing more than their duty in taking part in this work, and as furnishing them with one of the strongest encouragements they could desire to the hope of ultimate success. So *may* we argue with regard to the support which magistrates should afford the church of Christ. We are not bound to *limit* their attention to the arguments that arise from the express *law* of heaven, the formal rule of their official proceedings. We are *warranted, perfectly warranted*, by parity of reasoning, to direct their mind, after this, to appropriate prophecies, as announcing the fact, that they shall give their official countenance to the church even in her brightest period, as deepening the impression they should have, that this is their bounden duty, and as suggesting one of the most powerful incentives to unwearied activity and becoming liberality in its fulfilment.*

* Mr. Marshall, after stating the objection to the argument from prophecy which has been refuted above, adds the following extraordinary sentences: "In no case, nor under any pretext, is it competent for us to intermeddle with their fulfilment, whether prophecies of evil, or prophecies of good. Allowing that in all cases we understood them perfectly, the fulfilment must yet be left to Him by whom they have been uttered. He alone is the executioner of his own decrees. To say otherwise, were, in effect, to say, that men may mount the throne of the Most High, and take the reins of his government into their puny hands." P. 89, 90. Now, adopt this general principle laid down in such a sweeping style; and from it conclusions equally irrational and impious must follow. One prediction of *good* is the universal spread of the gospel. Must "*the fulfilment of this be left to Him by whom it has been utter-*

The prophecies to which I have alluded may be arranged into two classes—those in which the general principle in question is *expressed*,—and those from which it may be *inferred*. Of the former let the reader look at the following examples:

Psalm lxviii. 29, 30. "*Because of thy temple at Jerusalem shall kings bring presents unto thee. Rebuke the company of spearmen, the multitude of the bulls, with the calves of the people, till every one submit himself with pieces of silver.*" This passage, containing a prediction, and a prayer founded on the prediction, refers, in its ultimate application, to *the period of the Christian dispensation*. This is evident from the context, which introduces certain events that should happen *after* the advent of the

ed ?" Then how wrong are modern Christians in procuring the translation of the scriptures into the vernacular tongues of heathen countries, and in despatching missionaries to the four quarters of the globe, to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ among the Gentiles! Another prediction of *good* is the ultimate overthrow of all ecclesiastical establishments that have not been arranged according to the genius, and laws, and objects of the Christian economy. Must "the fulfilment be left to Him by whom it has been uttered?" Then, how wrong is it in modern reformers to hasten the arrival of that event, by rousing the public mind to the numerous abuses they have discovered in the present establishments, and by invoking the arm of Divine Providence to sweep them all away! Above all, how inconsistent is it in Mr. M. to "intermeddle in" its "fulfilment," by the successive publication of writings intended to bring about its accomplishment, and by calling upon others, "better qualified, to stand forward in a discussion from which immense advantage must result." The truth is, the principle is *false*. God *alone* is not the executioner of his own decrees. He associates with himself in this work, human beings who act under his righteous superintendence and retain their moral agency; and so long as they execute his gracious designs expressed in "prophecies of good," whether they are pious rulers, or private individuals, they cannot be said to "mount the throne of the Most High, and take the reins of his government into their puny hands."

promised Messiah—as his ascension in triumph into heaven, (17, 18,)—the accession to his church of heathen countries, (31,) and the celebration of his praises in the "kingdoms of the earth." (32.) Whatever, then, may have been the primary application of this passage, its complete fulfilment was reserved till the time when the Messiah should have mounted the throne of universal dominion, and despatched, by his approved heralds, the good tidings of great joy into pagan countries. Observe in the *second* place, that this passage speaks of *civil rulers* under the Christian economy. It specifies one class by the official name usually given them, *kings*, and introduces them under several striking images which powerfully express the fierceness, the cruelty, the wanton barbarities, and sanguinary wars of which they have often been guilty—*spearmen* and *bulls*. These, then, are the public persons of whose forbidding character we have this brief account, and for whose subsequent subjection to the reigning Redeemer we find this appropriate prayer offered. Observe *next*, that civil rulers, having submitted to Jesus, will devote to the service of the church, prefigured by "the temple at Jerusalem," a portion of their revenues—*presents, pieces of silver*. It is evident the Mediator himself, to whom these contributions are said to be offered, does not need them for his personal use. While on earth, it was requisite to the moral ends which he came to accomplish, that he should suffer extreme poverty; and, since his return to heaven, which contains spiritual worshippers in a spiritual temple, he does not need, for any celestial object, even the

smallest contributions. But to his church on earth, which requires the erection of material houses in which her ordinances may be observed, and the support of "able ministers" by whom they may be administered, they are essential. Accordingly, *this* is their destination in heathen lands that have received Christianity, by pious rulers, who first give themselves to the Redeemer as their Lord, and then consecrate a part of the public funds, with the consent of their pious subjects, to the proper maintenance of his church, his spiritual kingdom. Gill, the commentator, applies this prophecy to "such rulers as should become Christians in the earlier ages of Christianity; who brought their riches and wealth to Christ and into his church, with a design for the good and welfare of it; and as many will, in the latter day, who, being converted, will bring presents to the king Messiah, join his churches, and be their nursing fathers."

Isaiah xlix. 23. "*And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers: they shall bow down to thee with their face toward the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet; and thou shalt know that I am the Lord.*" Whatever may be the specific import of this interesting prophecy, it evidently foretells a *great privilege* which the church should enjoy, from pious rulers, under the Christian dispensation—a privilege which deserves to be placed among the happiest occurrences promised to her in this world—her deliverance from all the encroachments made on her liberties by antichristian oppressors in various lands, (v. 24, 25,) and her enlarge-

ment to an unprecedented extent by the conversion of large multitudes in all nations. With regard to the first branch of the prophecy, "kings shall be thy nursing fathers," there can be no doubt that kings are brought forward in *their public character*. It was in this character chiefly that they had been accustomed, prior to the coming of our Saviour, to assist the church. It was in this character chiefly that they could afford the efficient protection and the adequate support which she had always enjoyed. It was in this character chiefly, that they were presented in parallel prophecies, as extending assistance similar to what the Persian monarchs had rendered, when they secured her both external defence and pecuniary supplies. It must, then, be in the same character, that they will render, under the evangelical dispensation, that affectionate support, and that unceasing protection which have been promised her in the expressive character by which they are distinguished. With regard to the next part of the promise, "their queens shall be thy nursing mothers," it is equally evident that, whatever be the character they sustain in the state, in that character they will nourish the church. Allowing that they are *queens consorts*, the wives of the reigning kings, as such they possess, in virtue of their marriage, various prerogatives which belong to no other females in the kingdom.* They have separate revenues, distinct courts, a right to purchase property in their own name, to make leases, grant copy-holds, execute wills,

* "The queen *consort*, by virtue of her marriage, is participant of divers prerogatives above other women."—*Blackstone*, vol. i. 219.

and " do other acts of ownership without the concurrence of" their royal husbands. Furnished with such prerogatives, even though they are not vested with the same political authority confided to their husbands, how much good may *they* do by the judicious direction of their great influence and the generous distribution of their unfettered revenues? But who, I ask, has any right to say, that the promise in question means " *only* queens consorts?"* May it not include also, for aught that can be shown to the contrary, *queens regnant*—reigning queens, who, being lineal successors to those princes who preceded them, have mounted the thrones they occupy conjointly with their husbands? Upon this supposition, which is, to say the least, as probable as the one now questioned, they *are* public persons invested with authority above the subjects of the realm, and furnished, according to Blackstone, with " *the same powers, prerogatives, rights, dignities, and duties, as if*"† they had been kings. In this *public* character, they become nursing mothers to the church by the prudent use of the authority with which they are armed, and of the treasure with which they are furnished, upon scriptural principles. Accordingly, from history " it appears that kings and illustrious ladies, from the time of Constantine, began to nourish and cherish the church, promoted her increase, advanced her interests by their *edicts* as well as their example; builded places of worship for her use; granted im-

* Marshall's Ecclesiastical Establishments, 98.
† Vol. i. 219.

munities to her ministers from public burdens; appointed stipends to them from the *public treasury*."*

Isaiah lx. 1, 3, 9, 10, 11, 12, 16, 17. Let any individual, a converted Otaheitean, for example, who has never heard of the controversy respecting the exercise of magistratical authority about religion, read over, with attention, these prophetical verses,—what would be *his* impression on the subject? Would it be, that magistrates, as such, should stand aloof from the church in an attitude of perfect neutrality,—should withhold all official support from her as they would from an association of pagan idolaters,—and should expend the whole of their time, and power, and treasure on objects of a merely secular character? Would *this* be his impression? I am persuaded, *this* would *not* be his impression. His impression, produced by the simple reading, and strengthened by the subsequent consideration, of the passage would be, that kings have been promised as very great blessings to the church,—that they are required to promote her growing extension, her just ascendency, and her predicted triumphs, by the proper application both of their official power and their large revenues. In particular, the following things would strike his plain, pure, and unsophisticated mind, 1*st*, That the same *principle* of magistratical aid to the church which was sanctioned under the Jewish economy, is *perpetuated under the Christian*. He could not suffer his eye to pass over the words in which these prophetical verses are expressed, with-

* Vitringa on the passage.

out receiving this impression. When he reads that, on the conversion of Gentile countries, "*their kings shall minister unto*" her, that she "*shall suck the breasts of kings;*" that liberal contributions of money shall be offered for her service by those kingdoms over which they reign, (9, 17,) and that the kingdoms "*that will not serve*" her, "*shall perish, yea, be utterly wasted,*" he cannot imagine, even for a moment, that civil rulers should abandon religion, throughout their respective dominions, to private support, unaided in the smallest degree by the regal authority, and the ample treasure with which they are intrusted for the public good. Nor, 2dly, could he resist the impression, that magistratical aid is promised to the church, as *an external privilege of great value.* It is enrolled among the most glorious events destined to cheer her, after she has emerged from her present obscurity into her promised splendour,—such as the simultaneous conversion of countless myriads in all the unenlightened lands, the sudden restoration of the Jews from their wide dispersion in foreign countries, the consecration to her use of large sums which had formerly been squandered on objects of very questionable utility, and the revival in her members of an elevated devotion, which shall form the brightest of her coming glories. Who, then, will venture to allege, that this is a matter which Christians may treat with utter indifference, or even load with insolent contempt, without forfeiting their claim either to wisdom or to piety? "It *is*," says Scott, "a privilege for kings to minister to that cause, for which the King of kings shed his precious blood.

He, in whose hand are the hearts of kings, can easily bring them all to minister to his church; and he will do it in his due time." "Such as are princes and nobles," says Vitringa, "shall protect and promote religion; shall honour and cherish her ministers; procure necessary support for her schools and seminaries; defend and agent the cause of the church; and, without offering violence to consciences, shall, according to the rule of the gospel, employ their *authority* and means for the increase and enlargement of the church."

Of those prophecies from which this doctrine may be *inferred*, we offer the following examples:—

Psalm ii. 10, 11, 12. "*Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry.*" On this passage we observe, *first*, there cannot be entertained a reasonable doubt, that the rulers addressed in these verses are addressed in their *official* character. It was in *this* character they acted, when they conspired, to take away the life of the Messiah, to tear from his brow the crown of royal authority, to cast from them the cords of moral obligation, and insultingly to brave the righteous displeasure of Heaven. Now, as they are required to pursue a course the very reverse of this —to submit to his government, to obey his laws, and to seek his favour,—we must maintain, that they are brought forward in the very same character, rather than as private persons. "As this view of the words is agreeable to the concurrent judgment of the most judicious interpreters, so it is necessarily suggested

by the scope of the whole psalm, which relates to the public state of the kingdom of Christ; by the characters addressed; their being in the same station with those mentioned in the beginning; and by the judgments threatened for non-compliance with the injunction."* We observe *next*, that rulers in this public capacity are required to yield affectionate, grateful, and unreserved submission to the Redeemer. A lower meaning than this it is impossible to annex to the passage, without offering violence to its terms. "Their wisdom would be," says Scott; "to rejoice in their superior rank with trembling, lest it should subject them to more aggravated vengeance; to do homage to Christ, as their superior Lord, from whom they have their authority; to adore him as their God; and to welcome him as their Saviour, by the kiss of reverence, submission, and affection." Now, what follows from such submission to the Redeemer? Does it not follow, as naturally as a clear stream issues from a clear fountain, that they will render, with pleasure, fidelity, and perseverance, all the services required from them by him, for *the good of his church?* Recollecting, that he has purchased her with his precious blood, instituted in her a variety of ordinances for the instruction, improvement, and comfort of her members, overrules, for her welfare, all things put under his control, from the minutest insect to the mightiest world, and affords by her the greatest display of the divine glory that is seen either in this lower world, or in the third heavens,—re-

* Dr. M'Crie's Statement, &c. 131.

collecting these facts, now peculiarly interesting to their hearts, they will be prompted, by their better feelings, to do every thing in their power for the efficient administration of her ordinances, and the growing diffusion of her blessings.

Psalm lxxii. 10, 11. "*The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him.*" While these prophetical verses have an ultimate reference to the Messiah, their primary allusion was to the tributary princes. So celebrated was Solomon among these for his unrivalled wisdom, his boundless wealth, and his prosperous reign, that they vied with each other in sending him munificent presents* from their respective countries, which lay between the Mediterranean sea and the Persian gulf. But, we must recal to our minds, that a personage far more illustrious than even that great man, is the chief subject of this prediction,—even that mediatorial ruler, who has been crowned King over all the nations of the earth, by the Father, and who claims from them all the tribute of religious homage, as his unquestionable due. Thus explained, the prophecy teaches these two things: 1st, That all kingdoms with their rulers, shall yet offer *their homage to the Redeemer.* Hitherto, it must be confessed, they have not done this in that way which revelation has prescribed; though they have always been under his providential control, subserving the

* 2 Chron. ix. 1—26.

execution of his gracious designs, even by the worst passions they have indulged, and the blackest deeds they have perpetrated. But, we are now approaching a period, when, after a purer circulation of religious knowledge than they have ever enjoyed, and a greater effusion of divine influence than they have ever received, they will hasten with their confessions, their vows, and their services around his standard. "*All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord, and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee. For the kingdom is the Lords; and he is the Governor among the nations.*"* 2d, It teaches that the *pious rulers* of the nations will offer, for the service of the Redeemer, a *portion of the public wealth.* No sooner will they have been penetrated with a sense of his love, displayed in their personal salvation, and imbued with the pious feelings of affectionate gratitude and submission, than they will exert the most zealous endeavours for his church. Even with their crowns on their heads, and their sceptres in their hands, they will reckon no sacrifices too costly, and no services too laborious, for the sake of him to whose vicarious sufferings, endured in the room of sinners, they owe their numerous blessings in time, and their exalted pleasures in eternity. Indeed, it is already granted, "if the prophecy be considered as intimating the *homage* of distant nations to the Saviour, *that homage must include the consecration of wealth to a certain extent, for the furtherance of his cause; for none can truly believe*

* Psalm xxii. 27, 28.

*in him or submit to his authority without feeling both the obligation and the desire to 'minister to him of their substance.'"**

Psalm cii. 13, 15; cxxxviii. 4, 5. Isaiah lii. 15. When the reader has looked into these interesting and instructive prophecies, he will feel that they triumphantly prove the position for which they are now referred to—namely, that a period is foretold when all *civil rulers will be possessed of personal piety.* Surely, when they shall revere the glory of the Redeemer—sing in the ways of the Lord—shut their mouths at him after they have heard and considered Scripture truths which had never before been told them, they will have become the possessors of spiritual religion to which the administrators of political power have generally been strangers in *past* ages, according to the verdict of national histories. Now, what is the inference I deduce from this fact? From this fact am I not warranted to infer, that the rulers, governed by the principles of personal religion, will exert themselves in their public capacity on behalf of religion? Not only the pious constituents by whom they shall have been raised to political offices, but their own religious and benevolent affections, growing under the most salutary of all influences, will prompt them to the utmost exertions of which they are capable, for the advancement of a cause intwined with their most hallowed recollections and their most cheering anticipations. Certain it is, this has been the effect of personal piety on rulers in all past ages.

* Marshall's Eccles. Estab. 96, 97.

Look at the pious kings of Judah; their piety, instead of being an inert principle while they acted in their official capacity, was the chief spring of those assiduous efforts by which they restored the purity of divine worship. Look to the pious princes who have occasionally appeared in Christian lands; their piety, instead of being confined to the more retired walks of private conduct, governed their minds in the deliberations of their cabinets as well as in the devotions of their households. Indeed, it may be quëstioned, if history records the name of a single king who was decidedly pious, without acting on this principle. "Where is the example of a prince," it has been justly asked, "who, on his embracing Christianity, remained a quiet and satisfied spectator of the superstition of his countrymen, and who, though invested with influence, stood neutral when the great contest was at issue between God and Satan—between the contrivance of idolatry, and the establishment of Christianity? The thing is impossible. The magistrates' religion is either a fiction, or it has within it a vital and propagating principle commensurate with his means. If he give not more of his magistratical influence to that faith which he has adopted than to the idolatry he has thrown off, he is a hypocrite in his profession, or he is doing unnatural violence to his own feelings. The prophet was mad for the sight of his eyes, when he beheld the idolatries of Israel; and with a kindred spirit did those princes who, in the early ages of Christianity, became converts to the faith, contemplate the iniquities of the idolatries they had renounced. And again, after Christianity had

been well nigh extinguished under the cloud of popish errors, did the princes of Europe at the Reformation, "troop apace," as Milton has eloquently expressed it, "to the new-erected banners of salvation, and with their subjects in their train, protest against the abominations of antichrist."

Such are the chief arguments on which we rest the doctrine, that political rulers ought to exert their power on behalf of the true religion. That objections should have been urged against this doctrine, notwithstanding the variety of proofs by which it is supported, will not surprise any one who remembers, that objections have been alleged against the most fundamental articles of the Christian system, even though they rest on a basis which human efforts shall never undermine, and are defended by a power which shall secure them irresistible progress and universal prevalence. It is not necessary, however, to prolong the discussion much farther, by answers to objections, after the truth has been demonstrated by such incontestible evidence.

One objection is, that rulers cannot exercise the authority assigned them about religion, *without encroaching on the independence of the church.* But, certainly, it is practicable, by ordinary discrimination, to distinguish between the legitimate support which she can receive, and the injurious interferences which she should oppose. Surely, there is a palpable difference between giving her that beneficial aid which revelation has enjoined, and prescribing for her a

* Defence of Eccles. Estab. 41, 42.

creed, a ritual, or a government different from what her exalted Head has appointed. Let rulers only bow to the plain requirements of the divine law with that implicit deference which they ever should cherish,—especially, let ministers habitually maintain her essential liberties with that pious firmness which they ought always to uphold, instead of tamely surrendering them with that base subserviency to the reigning authorities, of which many have been guilty; and we have no fear but that her scriptural independence will be safe from all unhallowed infringements. There will neither be a royal commissioner in her assemblies with such power as he *might* exercise, for controlling their deliberations, modifying their decisions, or dissolving their meetings, nor a law of patronage in the statute book, authorizing others than the "Christian people" to appoint their religious instructors.* Was not the independence of the Jewish church upheld, in those happy periods, when the rulers were pious and the prophets were faithful?

Another objection to this doctrine is, *that it leads to persecution.* Would our opponents carefully examine the limits which are set to the authority of the magistrate *about* religion,—would they duly remem-

* It is an instructive fact, that, "in 1649, we find the General Assembly vesting the election of ministers (except in one or two very special instances,) in the heritors and elders of parishes, with the advice and consent of the parishioners;† and this continued to be the mode of election till 1662, when, in consequence of the Restoration of Charles I., presbytery was overthrown, and prelacy, with its persecuting accompaniments, usurped its place."—*Hints on Ecclesiastical Reform.* By Robert Burns, D.D.

† Acts of Assembly, 1649.

ber the unwearied exertions which our predecessors have made to rescue the right of private judgment from all undue restrictions, they *could* never charge us with the spirit of persecution which they have not scrupled to impute. They could never represent us as arming him with power to propagate religion by *force*—by dint of authority—by compulsory measures applied to the understandings and the consciences of mankind. "There are various actions of men about religion, respecting which magisterial authority may be justly employed in the way of restraint and punishment,—such as blasphemy, the open contempt of religion, or even of Christianity and the Bible in Christian states, the profanation of the name of God, of divine ordinances, and of the Sabbath. These and similar practices, we are of opinion, magistrates, in virtue of their office, may restrain or punish, according as the nature of the offence and the good of society may require, without being chargeable with any persecution. But, it will not follow from this, that magistrates are warranted forcibly to impose a profession of faith upon their subjects, or to oblige them to worship God in a certain mode, under civil penalties to be inflicted upon all who dissent. Nor is any thing of this kind *necessarily* implied in laws which recognise, establish, and support, a particular profession of Christianity."* Accordingly it has been candidly admitted by a writer on the other side, that "*it is not unwarrantable or inexpedient for the civil magistrate, in a Christian country,*

* Statement, &c. 143, 144.

to frame regulations for preventing the public and flagrant desecration of the Sabbath. Such regulations may be indispensably requisite to protect the majority from annoyance in the profession and practice of their religion."*

A third objection is, *that this principle has a tendency to secularize the church.* That the church is a spiritual society, instituted chiefly for spiritual ends, and composed entirely of true believers, I most readily allow. I allow also, that to bring down the principles of religion to the level of public opinion in civil society, to admit to her most sacred privileges all citizens, even though they are destitute of religious qualifications, and to invest with the office of the sacred ministry individuals whose actions show that they are governed by mercenary views far more than religious feelings, is to inflict a deep and deadly pollution on her character. But who does not see, that these are accidental *abuses*, not necessary results, of the principle that we have established? Let *the word of God* be the *standard* according to which our ecclesiastical systems are to be constructed in time coming,—let governments submit to have every branch of their policy towards religion regulated on Christian principles,—and let nations, instead of raising to political power men destitute of religious principle, prefer those who are recommended to their choice by scriptural qualifications ;† and we are sure her spiritual privileges will never be prostituted, nor

*. Theol. Mag. for June, 1830.

† See the following Section.

her sacred laws violated, by her alliance with the state.

Another objection is, *that the church prospered during the first three centuries without any support from civil rulers.* If this is an argument sufficient to set aside the aid of magisterial authority in succeeding ages, it will also prove the impropriety of having *learned ministers,* in those ages. It is undeniable, that the *majority* of the first preachers of the gospel were *illiterate* men, taken from the humblest walks of life. They had received no literary education qualifying them to exert an influence over the minds, the morals, the opinions, and passions of their countrymen. Yet their preaching was crowned with distinguished success, multitudes, wherever they came, embracing the good tidings of salvation, adhering to the church despite the atrocious cruelties inflicted on them, and acquiring a measure of religious intelligence and moral purity, that has never been surpassed. Why, then, should the church, in these days, require candidates for the ministry, to pass through a laborious process of preparation before they receive licence? Why wait till they have spent several years in studying the principal sciences, examining revealed religion, and acquiring habits of mental application? Rather should she draw her instructors at once from the illiterate artisans in our cities, and the ignorant fishermen on our coasts!— Besides, it must be remarked, that the absence of magistratical support, during the first ages of Christianity, *was necessary to a divine purpose.* What

purpose had the Almighty in view in employing the "unlearned" teachers to whom I have just alluded? Was it not to show, that the success which followed *their* feeble efforts was the result of his own omnipotent grace, and that the tribute of honour which was due for such a glorious result, should be offered to him only?* Now this purpose, so worthy of his infinite wisdom, could not have been effected with such eminent clearness, had he raised up pious magistrates to take part in the propagation of the gospel. The nations, looking at the official influence they possessed, the revenues they distributed among the ministers, and the seasonable protection they afforded the converts against the resentment of their idolatrous neighbours, would not have derived the strong impression which they otherwise felt, that the rapidity with which Christianity was disseminated over many lands, was illustriously the work of God. I cannot resist the conviction, that this was a chief reason for which he withheld from the church, during the time specified, the promised blessing of "*nursing fathers.*" But passing this, we should remember, as is well remarked by Dr. M'Crie, "that it does not become us to prescribe to God, with respect to '*the times and the seasons,*' at which he shall confer any blessing which he has promised. He discovers his sovereignty in this matter, and has wise reasons for his conduct, of which we may be left in ignorance, or which we may overlook. The

* 1 Cor. i. 27—31. 2 Cor. iv. 7.

possession of the land of Canaan was promised, as an eminent blessing to the seed of Abraham; but it was hundreds of years before he actually bestowed it upon them."*

* Statement, &c. 148.

SECTION VII.

THE QUALIFICATIONS OF POLITICAL RULERS.

AMONG other treacherous maxims current, a few years ago, on this branch of civil polity, this was not the least prominent, that "*measures, not men*" deserve the public attention. This "slavish doctrine, so full of mischief, and so calculated to gain the favour of feeble, thoughtless, and spiritless natures, was every day echoed in our ears." If the throne were occupied by a prince notorious for his scandalous irregularities, or if the administration were committed to men whose desire of private acquisitions was equalled only by their hatred of liberal principles, or if the subordinate offices of the magistracy were filled up with individuals whose chief recommendation was either past sycophancy or promised servility, our murmurs were always repelled by the assertions, that we had nothing to do with their *character*, however

prominent to our view,—that their *public conduct* was the only thing we were entitled to examine with the freedom becoming citizens,—that, provided their official *measures* were tolerable, it mattered not though their personal qualities were despicable.

Of such a maxim it is scarcely necessary to remark, that it severs the connexion which has always existed between *causes and their effects.* Does the husbandman expect to reap, on an arid soil that has never been cultivated with requisite care, the *rich crops* that awaken his joy and increase his riches? Does the gardener expect to gather, on the wild trees that have sprung up in his grounds, the *delicious fruits* that delight the eye and gratify the taste? Or does the church expect to receive, from pastors who are destitute of requisite abilities sanctified by divine influence, those sound, affectionate, and appropriate instructions that promote the present seriousness and the future welfare of her members? No more should a country expect, from rulers destitute of all suitable qualifications, the successful discharge of those important duties which have been assigned them in their respective offices. Selfish passions operating in the heart, and false views misleading the judgment, will as naturally produce mischievous measures in their actual policy, as a polluted fountain will send forth impure streams, or a corrupt tree will yield unsound fruit.

The magnitude of the duties devolved on civil rulers also refutes this pernicious maxim. Were the offices they fill constituted merely for the purpose of affording them handsome *emoluments,*—did their chief

service consist in *subscribing* the receipts they grant on drawing their salaries from the treasury, then, certainly, it were a point of very little consequence what qualifications they possess. To the country it would not be of the smallest moment, whether its unmerited *gratuities* were consumed by idiots or philosophers, by sensualists or saints, by unprincipled infidels or by true-hearted Christians. But when it is remembered, that they occupy situations to which the most momentous duties are annexed, preside over the public interests of millions of their fellow-creatures, and deserve pecuniary rewards proportioned to the value of the services required from them, it must be admitted, they *ought* to possess appropriate qualifications of no mean order. It is folly, or something worse, to deny this. What family of prudence, in engaging a servant for the humblest employment, would overlook the consideration of his personal qualities and his former habits? And shall states be accounted wise in altogether excluding from their view the moral principles, the rational powers, and the previous acquirements of those they select as their rulers?

Let me add, that experience has proved, that no provisions of a constitution, however excellent, can preserve the liberties of a country, unless they are administered by *suitable* officers. Have we not seen princes, after they had matured their arbitrary projects, throw off the mask of patriotism which they had worn for years, and overthrow the charters which they had sworn to support? Have we not seen statesmen, after they had secured the confidence of

the country by their fair pretences, turn upon the very best of the institutions they were bound to defend, with the insidious thrust of traitors, and rear on their ruins the fabric of despotism, crimsoned with the blood of the purest patriots? Have we not seen even the soldiery called in to suspend the wisest laws, the execution of which was opposed to the designs of a tyrannical faction, and to put down the bravest citizens, whose heroic efforts were used in defence of their constitutional liberties? Away, then, with the dangerous sophism that would screen the personal character of public men from our view —the base maxim that would allow our chartered liberties to be undermined before we had any right to complain,—the silly notion always entertained, or rather the senseless outcry always raised, "by the slavish adherents of bad rulers, for the purpose of giving their employers breathing time to work mischief, and preventing the people from looking after their own rights and their own interests, until it is too late. It is a doctrine which, if universally accepted, leaves the worst of tyrants nothing to desire, —no help to seek,—in the compassing of his most flagitious designs. To preach it now, requires no common portion of assurance, when the late events in France were notoriously rendered necessary by the prevalence of this very heresy. Yes! the revolution which expelled the Bourbons, was called down upon their heads by those who held, that France had no right to complain, until some measures of an evil nature had been attempted,—who denied that it was of any moment who held the seals

of office, and bade us wait till we saw their acts before we demanded their removal."*

Such are some of the considerations which show it to be the duty of every people to examine the personal qualities, as well as the public acts, of their rulers. But I go a step further than this. In a former section I demonstrated, that revelation contains the true standard of civil government,—in other words, that it prescribes the supreme criterion according to which those states that have obtained this superior light, should act in forming their constitutions, choosing their officers, and determining their leading objects. Now, I affirm, as a principle flowing from that general truth, that *such states are bound to select for their rulers only men who possess the several qualifications prescribed in the volume of revelation.* They are not left to their own discretion, their own judgment, or their own inclinations, in this matter. They are not referred to the provisions of their own charter, which may be defective, or to the practice of other countries, which have received no better guide than the light of human reason. But they are required to look into their Bible, —the ultimate criterion,—to observe what qualifications *it* demands, in rulers worthy to preside over Christian countries, and to fix only upon those candidates in whom a considerable measure of these qualifications is found to exist. Such is the course of proceeding sanctioned in the Scriptures, both by express precepts and by approved examples; and in

* Edin. Rev. No. ciii. 261, 262.

favour of its immediate adoption by modern kingdoms, blessed with revelation, I urge the following considerations.

1. *Pious respect to the authority of God,* recommends the choice of such rulers. That we should cultivate implicit submission to *his* will in every thing in which his will has been revealed, is a first principle from which no religious mind will dissent. But, do we do this, in the selection of our rulers, when we overlook what revelation has fixed respecting the principles, the virtues, and the abilities they should possess? In raising to the offices of magistracy men notorious for irreligion, or heresy, or immorality, do we not manifest the greatest disrespect for his authority,—the utmost contempt of his law? Do we not virtually place our erring judgments above the requirement of his infinite mind, and prefer the gratification of our irregular desires to the promotion of his "*good pleasure?*"

2. *A prudent regard to the national welfare* dictates the choice of such rulers. I deny not, that rulers, destitute of the religious qualifications prescribed in the Bible, may prove very useful, even in a Christian country. Their natural talents, cultivated with care, and applied with diligence to the functions they have undertaken, may enable them to acquire great influence in the senate, the cabinet, and the courts of law. Their natural principles too, honour, integrity, benevolence, and humanity, may be so strong as to restrain them from evils that irreligion would otherwise produce, and impel them to many actions from which irreligion would otherwise draw

them away. Even their ambition of popular applause, though one of the most selfish passions, may prompt them to avoid, with scrupulous care, all those injurious measures and those debasing pleasures that might expose them to present reproach or future execration. But, at the same time, religious principle, superadded to these natural endowments, would render them still more *useful*, as well as more amiable, more estimable, and more trust-worthy. Cherishing supreme love to God, as well as natural benevolence towards mankind; fostering a habitual sense of his immediate presence with them in all situations; maintaining an inviolable regard to the authority of his revealed law in all their proceedings; imploring that divine strength which has been promised to the pious in all offices easy or arduous, humble or exalted; surveying that high tribunal before which they must give an account of all their actions, official no less than private; and anticipating that solemn hour when they shall be honoured with the gracious rewards awaiting them in heaven, they should possess *superior fitness* for those branches of government with which they are intrusted. This is no untried theory. The history of the pious rulers in Judah who were possessed of scriptural qualifications, confirms it in the most triumphant manner. Under *them*, religion, morals, peace, liberty, happiness, and every public interest flourished, in a degree proportionate to their personal piety, their moral worth, and their elevated patriotism. Who, then, that wishes the revival in his own country of those great interests that have sunk so low in modern times, and that are so essential to

the restoration of national prosperity, would not give a decided preference to those men that possess the scriptural qualities which have the sanction of the divine authority, and the recommendation of past experience?

3. The choice of such rulers is farther recommended, on the general principle, that *nations are bound to prefer the best qualified individuals they can procure.* Even *pagan* states acted on this principle in their most virtuous periods. "The Grecians, amongst others who have followed the light of reason," says Sydney, "knew no other original title to the government of a nation, than that wisdom, valour, and justice, which were beneficial to the people. These qualities gave beginning to those governments which we call *Heroum Regna;* and the veneration paid to such as enjoyed them, proceeded from a grateful sense of the good received from them: *they* were thought to be descended from the gods, who, in virtue and beneficence, surpassed other men. A people, therefore, that sets up kings, dictators, consuls, pretors, or emperors, does it not that they may be great, glorious, rich, or happy, but that it may be well with themselves and their posterity. This is not accomplished simply by setting one, a few, or more men in the administration of powers, but by placing the authority in those who may rightly perform their office. This is not every man's work: valour, integrity, wisdom, industry, experience, and skill are required for the management of those military and civil affairs that necessarily fall under the care of the chief magistrates. He or they, therefore, may rea-

sonably be advanced above their equals who are *most fit to perform* the duties belonging to their stations, in order to the public good, for which they were instituted. Nothing can be easier than to show, that it is only wisdom, justice, valour, and other commendable virtues, which are not hereditary, that can give the preference; and that the only reason why it should be given, is, that men so qualified can better than others accomplish the ends for which societies are constituted. There may be a hundred thousand men in an army, who are all equally free; but they only are naturally most fit to be commanders or leaders who most excel in the virtues required for the right performance of those offices; and that, not because it is good for them to be raised above their brethren, but because it is good for their brethren to be guided by them, as it is ever good to be governed by the wisest and the best. If the nature of man be reason, *detur digniori*, in matters of this kind, is the voice of nature; but as the work of a magistrate, especially if he be the supreme, is the highest, noblest, and most difficult that can be committed to the charge of a man, a more excellent virtue is required in the person who is to be advanced to *it* than for any other; and he that is most excellent in that virtue, is reasonably and naturally to be preferred before any other."* If, then, the men endowed with the pure principles and the excellent virtues prescribed in the Bible would make the *best* magistrates, who, that has the smallest pretensions

* Discourses, &c. p. 36, 38, 61.

to wisdom, or the smallest regard to the public well-being, would hesitate, for a moment, to give *them* the decided preference? "If there be any precept, that, by the light of nature, we can, in matters of this kind, look upon as certain, it is, *that the government of a people* should be given to him that can best perform the duties of it. If there were a man, who, in wisdom, valour, justice, and purity, surpassed all others, he might be called a king by nature, because he is best able to bear the weight of so great a charge; and like a good shepherd to lead the people to good. Now, lest I should be thought to follow my own inventions, and call them reason, or the light of God in us, I desire it may be observed, *that God himself has ever taken this method.* When he raised up Moses to be the leader of his people, he endowed him with the most admirable gifts of his Spirit that ever he bestowed upon a man. When he chose seventy men to assist him, he endowed them with the same spirit. Joshua had no other title to succeed him than the like evidence of God's presence with him. When the people, through sin, fell into misery; he did not seek out their descendants, nor such as boasted in a prerogative of birth, but showed whom he designed for their deliverance, by bestowing such gifts upon him as were required for the performance of his work."*

Having vindicated the importance of scriptural qualifications in the rulers placed over Christian nations, I shall next inquire what those qualifications

* Discourses, &c. p. 29.

are. A brief enumeration of them will serve, both to corroborate the principle that has just now been proved, and to heighten in our estimation the Bible, as the grand repository of political wisdom.

1. *Intellectual ability* claims the first place. When the Jewish people were about to obtain rulers, the men they were directed to choose were to have this qualification prominent among others. "*Thou shalt provide out of all the people able men.*" "*Take ye wise men, and understanding, and known among your tribes, and I will make them rulers over you.*" "*After the wisdom of thy God that is in thine hand, set magistrates and judges who may judge all the people that are beyond the river, all such as know the laws of thy God.*"*

"All civilized nations and countries have," says a judicious divine of the seventeenth century, "expressed their sense of this, that governors and men in authority ought to be of *good understanding*. In the portraitures of the Egyptian kings, their crowns and diadems were twisted with *serpents*, to denote how requisite *wisdom* is in persons of that rank and station, and in all subordinate magistrates and rulers. When our forefathers, the Saxons, gave the name of *Koning*, which is synonymous with a *wise man*, to their kings, they taught us what was a necessary property in crowned heads. If they want this, they are a very ridiculous and shameful spectacle, howsoever great and splendid their titles are. Most excellently to this purpose, one of the ancients takes notice

* Exod. xviii. 21. Deut. i. 13. Ezra vii. 27.

how shameful and absurd it is for him who hath the ensigns of *public authority* carried before him, to be a *weak* and *foolish* person; these look very ill together. It is a mistaken vanity, and an empty and insignificant show of honours to shine in purple, and bear all other badges of government, and yet to have a dark and sordid soul, a mind destitute of knowledge and reason. There is a necessity, then, of a sufficient portion of wisdom and knowledge. It is true, this, which I mention in the first place, is not the chiefest and principal qualification of a ruler; for a good heart is of more worth than a good head: yet it is certain that the head *influences* the heart and life; and no man, especially no magistrate, can be really good, unless he knows and understands his duty. This leads the way to all the rest; for *sobriety, justice, mercifulness,* and all that I shall name afterwards, must be founded on knowledge and discretion. The ground-work of all goodness is in the understanding, and especially a governor's duty must have this for its *basis.*"*

Under intellectual ability are included, not merely natural endowments, but various acquirements. Whatever offices rulers hold, it is of very great importance that they have improved their mental faculties by early cultivation, studied the principal sciences with great care, and formed habits of correct thinking, of patient research, and prompt action, by previous education. Especially ought they to have studied *politics as a science,* not satisfied with

* Dr. Edwards' Theologia Reformata, pp. 495, 496.

the loose maxims that float confusedly on the surface of the public mind, but examining the fundamental principles, that lie open to the diligent inquirer only, in their order, origin, connexions, and results. If you load a vessel with a precious cargo, for a distant country, you do not employ a commander unacquainted with the art of navigation. If you equip an army for defending the national rights against the violence of unprovoked aggression, you do not choose a general who knows nothing of the military profession. If you wish a physician who may cure your bodies of the maladies with which they are afflicted, you do not prefer some ignorant pretender who has never examined the structure of the human frame, nor learned the approved modes of medical treatment. Why, then, choose as legislators, as statesmen, as councillors, as judges, as rulers of any sort, men who have not studied, with the requisite attention, the leading principles of politics and jurisprudence, whose memories are not furnished with an accurate knowledge of those laws and precedents according to which they should act, and whose understandings are not trained to the formation of those *comprehensive* views on which alone they can decide, with equity, questions that arise in domestic and foreign policy.

2. Equally necessary is *religious principle in civil rulers.* According to the unalterable requisitions of the divine will, this is to form a distinguished requisite. "*Thou shalt provide out of all the people—such as fear God.*" "*He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God.*" "*Take heed what ye do; for ye judge not for man, but for the*

Lord, who is with you in the judgment. Wherefore now, let the fear of the Lord be upon you; take heed and do it; for there is no iniquity with the Lord our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts." *

I am well aware, considerable difficulty must be encountered, in the present state of society, by electors who would give their suffrages only to religious persons. Where, it may be asked, are the requisite number of individuals to be found, who, to the necessary portion of talents, acquirements, and riches, add the credible profession of spiritual religion? But, it should be remembered, our temporary inability, from certain circumstances, to perform a moral duty, does not, by any means, annul the obligations under which we are brought by the divine authority. We ought ever to be approximating the prescribed rule as near as our present means can reach. Since God has delivered explicit injunctions, requiring us to choose pious men for our rulers,—since he has announced his gracious purpose in numerous prophecies, that rulers under the Christian dispensation shall be pious, —and since he has always bestowed special marks of approbation on those who proved their piety by their virtuous behaviour and beneficent reign, it is certainly our indispensable duty to use our best efforts, that those whom we are instrumental in raising to political power, be under the influence of personal piety.

Annexed to the office of civil rulers are various

* Exod. xviii. 21. 2 Sam. xxiii. 3. 2 Chron. xix. 6, 7.

duties, which they cannot perform with propriety unless they are imbued with religion. They must, for example, *administer oaths*. But, with what becoming reverence can they do this, if they are irreligious sceptics, profane swearers, open blasphemers, habitual despisers of that Name in which they speak when they pronounce these solemnities before witnesses, jurors, and others! They must *execute the laws of God*. But, with what good effect can they do this, if they themselves trample some of his laws under foot, exclude all reverence, affection and veneration for him from their minds, treat his worship, secret, domestic, and public, with absolute contempt, and prostitute his Day to political business and festive pleasures! They must *support the true religion*. But, if they themselves are irreligious, will they not be ready to degrade Christianity to their secular ends, to pollute it by an alliance with their unscriptural administrations, and to *create*, according to their own erroneous views, a *political church* which may tolerate unreproved the debasing vices to which they are addicted, and enforce unconditionally the arbitrary acts on which they are bent? It is in fact, the *irreligion* of rulers that has infused into the church those corruptions that have arisen from her connexion with the state, and imposed on her those trammels with which she has been bound, that she may the more readily subserve their worldly designs. In a word, "a ruler is under *peculiar* obligations to sustain this character—*a man of piety*—beside those which are common to other men. His duties are become more important and arduous; and demand, in

an eminent degree, the blessing of God to enable him to perform them aright. He has greater means of doing good put into his hands, and needs, in a peculiar degree, the divine assistance to enable him to use them. If he should be left to unwise or wicked measures, they will be far more mischievous to his countrymen, than any thing which he could formerly have done, when he was a private citizen. His personal conduct also cannot fail to be much more beneficial, or much more noxious, to his country, than if he had not been invested with a public character."*

On many accounts, then, is it most desirable, that rulers should be *men of decided piety*. Piety would diffuse a new lustre over their other excellencies, how eminent soever they are. It would consecrate genius, and literature, and science, and erudition, and taste, and eloquence to the best of purposes. It would rear justice, and honour, and probity, and benevolence, and sobriety, and fidelity on the firmest of foundations. It would be the master-principle that keeps in due subordination all the natural powers with which their minds are gifted—the sacred link that binds them, in indissoluble union, to Him who gives wisdom, and prudence, and courage, and patience, and every virtue. "As the pilot guides even the most experienced sailors amid the rocks, and quicksands, and currents, upon which they might otherwise run; as the general directs even the most disciplined troops, in the day of battle, to the posi-

* Dwight's Theology, vol. iv. 139.

tions they should take up, and the charges they should make; as the sun in the centre of the system, regulates all the inferior bodies in their respective revolutions, and spreads over them a portion of his own native brilliance, so *religion* enthroned in their hearts would bind, in sacred concord, all their original principles, intellectual, moral, and physical, and apply them, with unswerving fidelity, to those great purposes of utility for which they have been implanted. Are there statesmen of undoubted patriotism and splendid talents who do much good, without religion? it is indisputable, they would accomplish far greater good, did they adorn their own character, and regulate their whole conduct, by the superior principles of religion. Are there magistrates of natural abilities and valuable acquirements, who are of great utility to the country over which they preside, without religion? it is no less indisputable, that they should be of still greater utility, did they cultivate piety in their own minds, exemplify devotion in their own households, and govern all their political affairs according to the explicit requirements of the *Divine Law.*"*

3. Civil rulers ought to be *distinguished for moral worth.* A foolish attempt, I know, has been made, chiefly by unprincipled parasites, to separate the *private* from the *public* character of a ruler. It has been alleged, that he may be addicted to the grossest vices in private life that his depraved passions can enjoy, and yet be adequate to his official duties by

* Discourses on Early Piety, pp. 51-53.

the mere force of his intellectual abilities. And it must be confessed, we have seen various examples of princes and statesmen who plunged deep into licentious pleasures, known far beyond the precincts of their palaces and mansions, and who, notwithstanding, obtained renown by the skill, the energy and the success with which they discharged their respective functions. At the same time, who will have the effrontery to deny the necessity of virtuous principles in our public men,—except a few base courtiers in the metropolis who have sacrificed integrity at the shrine of sycophancy, and a few stupid parasites in various parts of the land, who think the flattery of the great the most exquisite and elevated of all earthly enjoyments?

Let it be remembered, that revelation demands of all rulers, whatever the rank they hold, that they be men of acknowledged virtue. It specifies *justice*,* that they may protect the rights of all classes, decide all questions with strict impartiality, and distribute the benefits of government to all ranks according to their respective claims. It specifies *mercy*,† that they may temper the administration of justice with clemency, remit the punishment of criminals with a sound discretion, prevent the pernicious wars that have so often sprung from the malevolent passions, and restrain from the atrocious cruelties that have so long been tolerated by bloody laws. It specifies *veracity*,‡ that they may keep the trust they have re-

* 2 Sam. xxiii. 3. † Prov. xx. 28.
‡ Isaiah xvi. 5. Prov. xxix. 12.

ceived, fulfil the oaths they have sworn, maintain the treaties they have contracted with the representatives of foreign powers, and utter nothing but truth in all the communications they address to their own subjects, and in all the correspondences they carry on with foreign courts. It specifies *temperance*,* that they may repel the dissolute from their presence, remember the laws they have studied, consider the functions they have undertaken, retain the full use of their faculties on all occasions, and exercise that habitual vigilance which is so requisite to prevent the passing of bad laws and the choice of injurious measures. It specifies *hatred of covetousness*,† that they may never accept bribes, prefer their private interests to the public good, and accumulate splendid fortunes from the spoils of their injured country; and that they, under the purest patriotism, may choose the general welfare of the community as their chief object, and offer willingly every sacrifice by which they may advance the prosperity and the happiness, the independence and the honour of their beloved land.

Let it be farther remembered, that rulers, destitute of moral worth, cannot benefit society by *their example*. They are fountains of corruption. The streams of profligacy issuing from them first pollute the higher orders, and afterwards descend, with destructive rapidity, among the lower classes. "*The wicked walk on every side, when the vilest men are exalted.*" On the other hand, when they are virtu-

* Prov. xxxi. 4, 5. Eccles. xi. 17. † Exod. xviii. 21.

ous, their example allures to the practice of the virtues which they cultivate, more effectually than could be done by their *edicts*.

> Componitur orbis
> Regis at exemplum; nec sic inflectere sensus
> Humanos *edicta* valent, ut *vita regentis*;
> Mobile mutatur semper cum principe vulgus.

Now, "it is this moral or immoral influence, in promoting or injuring the virtues of others—an influence of which it is impossible for them to divest themselves—that gives to those who are in any way distinguished above the crowd a fearful responsibility. It is not their own conscience only for which they are answerable; they are answerable also, in some measure, for the consciences of others. *In the life of a sovereign, then, there is nothing private.* His friendships, his very amusements, are not friendships and amusements only:—they are public virtue and public guilt. If he think more of the trappings of his state than of his duties,—if the splendour of some courtly festival be more important to him, than that noblest of spectacles which is to be found in the general happiness of a peaceful and virtuous land,—if the favourites of his private confidential hours, whom he thus offers to his people, as models of the conduct that is worthiest of being honoured, be those who are known to the world only by superior profligacy,—there may be virtue still in that state; but it is only because there are in it principles of virtue too powerful to be overcome by the vicious authority even of the most powerful. If, however, a prince be, indeed, what a prince should

be, he has the comfort of knowing that he is not *enjoying only* the happiness of virtue, but diffusing it; that since his actions must be lessons, they are lessons of good; and that if, by his example, he exercise a sway more extensive than that of his laws or his arms, it is a sway which is exercised only for the happiness of the world."*

History supports the truth of these remarks. "*Virtuous rulers*," says Dr. Dwight, "have always, unless in times of peculiar violence and prejudice, been seen and acknowledged to be public blessings. Every virtuous prince of Judah was regularly a public blessing; beloved of his people; devoted to the advancement, and sedulously engaged in employing the means of accomplishing the actual and extensive advancement, of their happiness; the acknowledged object of peculiar divine favour; the cause, in this manner, for which peculiar blessings descended on his nation; and the honourable instrument of producing a sudden, general, and important reformation, not only in his court, but throughout his kingdom. Whenever such a prince ascended the throne, piety and morality immediately lifted up their heads, and began to find friends, to abash vice, to silence murmurs, to diminish sufferings, and to create, what they always create, public and individual happiness. Such princes also regularly appointed, so far as it was in their power, men resembling themselves to the subordinate offices of government; and thus stationed public benefactors in

* Brown's Lectures, vol. iv. 251, 252.

every corner of their country. Take now the reverse of this picture. The *wicked princes* to whose dominion these nations,—Judah and Israel,—were at times subjected, blasted both their virtue and their happiness. By their pestilential example, and under their deadly influence, the nation of Israel became abandoned. Truth, justice, and piety sighed their last farewell to the reprobated race, and took their final flight. A nuisance to the world, and an object of the Divine abhorrence, the unhappy nation became lost to every hope of recovery, and was finally given up as a prey to the Assyrian, at that time the general scourge and destroyer of mankind. It is impossible for any people, with its eyes open, to wish for such rulers as these. When it is remembered, that this testimony concerning evil rulers is the testimony of God himself; that the same causes will always produce the same effects; and that the rulers were no more injurious to Israel than they will be to every other people governed by them; it is plain, that no people can elect such rulers without assuring themselves, that in this very act they are accomplishing their own ruin. A nation which elects wicked rulers, it ought ever to be remembered, is chargeable, not only with the guilt of being corrupted, as Israel was, but with the additional and peculiar guilt also of originating the means of its own corruption. It not only *becomes* wicked, but *makes itself wicked*, by giving to evil men the power and influence which enable them to spread the plague of vice through every part of the political body. What man of common sense and sober reflection

can consent to make himself chargeable with these evils?"*

Such, then, are the principal qualifications required by the sacred writings in civil rulers,—*intellectual ability,—religious principle,—and moral worth.* After reviewing the mass of evidence exhibited, on the preceding pages, in support of these; what must we think of the notion vented in some quarters, that "*the due measure of scripture qualifications belongs not to the being and validity of the magistrate's office?*" Is *this* a notion that can be reconciled, on any principles of just interpretation, with the passages that have been quoted from the Scriptures, or that any branch of the Christian church can vindicate, without manifest disrespect to their author? Of that notion I affirm the three following things, additional to the formal arguments already brought forward. 1. *It pours impious contempt on the authority of God.* God has enjoined expressly, repeatedly, and solemnly, that those who elect rulers, shall prefer persons possessed of certain qualifications which he has specified. This injunction he has conveyed through various channels expressive of his will, and enforced by several sanctions worthy of his character. But, according to the notion on which we are animadverting, persons may prove very good magistrates in a Christian country *without* these qualifications; and electors discharge their duty very well, by choosing individuals destitute of them. Is not *this* casting contempt on his gracious appoint-

* Theology, vol. iv. 146, 147, 148.

ment? Is not *this* elevating their erring judgment above his infinite mind, and preferring their irregular inclinations to his righteous requisitions? Is not *this* laying themselves open to the charge preferred against Israel in similar circumstances: "*they have transgressed my covenant, and trespassed against my law,—they have set up kings, but not by me; they have made princes, and I knew it not?*"* 2. *It implies stupid indifference to the best interests of society.* There cannot exist, in any sound mind, a doubt, that persons with scriptural qualifications would prove *far better rulers* than those without them. They would enact better laws,—adopt better measures,—furnish better examples,—and, in a word, exert greater influence in promoting national obedience to the revealed will of God, on which national prosperity has been proved to depend. "That such rulers are agreeable to the will of God, and that he has required all rulers to be such, cannot," says Dr. Dwight, "be questioned. No more can it be questioned, that one great reason why he has required them to be of this character, is the establishment, in this way, of the happiness of the people whom they rule. But, in the case supposed, the people themselves elect their rulers. They are therefore bound, indispensably, to elect such, and such only, as are agreeable to the will of God, as unfolded in his word; such, and such only, as will contribute directly to the establishment of public happiness. By what solemn obligations are they

* Hosea viii. 1, 4.

bound to take the most effectual care, that those whom they elect be men of acknowledged wisdom and virtue! To choose men of the contrary character is to rebel against the known will of God, to sport with their own happiness, and to hazard that of their posterity. In the very act of electing weak and wicked men to places of magistracy, they testify publicly to God and the world, that they choose to have weak and wicked men for their rulers. All the evils of a weak and wicked administration of government are, therefore, chargeable, in the first instance, and in the prime degree, to themselves only."* In fine, *it is calculated to have a demoralizing influence on rulers themselves.* Let the maxim be proclaimed in their ears, that scriptural qualifications do not belong to the validity of their office, and are not necessary to entitle them to conscientious subjection; and the most injurious effects are likely to ensue. No doubt, if they are good men of becoming mind, they will sincerely pity the ignorance of their ill-instructed teachers, and sharply reprove the baseness of their courtly flatterers. But, if they are bad men, they will eagerly embrace a maxim that so opportunely palliates their greatest deficiencies, and excuses their worst vices. They will readily take fresh courage in their criminal indulgencies, their debasing pleasures, and their total destitution of true godliness. The rebukes of their consciences will be silenced; the remonstrances of their reason repelled; the complaints of a virtuous minority disregarded;

* Theology, vol. iv. 145.

and, should any fears of future retribution arise in their minds, in seasons of cool reflection, these will be allayed, in some measure, by the soothing maxim which they have caught from the lips of *Christians*, —*piety and virtue are not necessary to the office of rulers.* And is it thus that *Christians* ought to sooth the feelings of irreligious rulers, and encourage them in their private criminalities, by the continued reiteration of a licentious maxim? Ought they not rather to use every effort to reclaim them, by inculcating the necessity of personal piety and moral purity to the public offices with which they are invested, and by holding up to view the *Divine law* as the supreme standard according to which they should act in *all* the relations they occupy, and by which they shall be judged for *all* the actions they perform?

It may be objected, that "those who elect, would often be unable to distinguish, with certainty, the pious and the virtuous from the opposite classes. Unprincipled men, to gain their selfish ends, may assume such fair appearances, and utter such plausible professions, as shall deceive even very acute judges of character." In reply to this objection, let me remind the reader, that the churches of Christ are equally unable to make this discrimination with certainty, with all the intelligence they have acquired. Yet are they bound, by the highest obligations, to invite to the ministerial office only those who possess the peculiar qualifications prescribed in the New Testament; and it must be confessed, where they have their choice *unfettered*, even in established churches, they find no great difficulty in passing over

those who prove themselves very deficient in the requisite endowments. Let it be considered farther, that the outward actions of individuals, for a considerable length of time, and in different relations of life, form a tolerably accurate test of their inward principles. If, on the one hand, they are dissipated, impure, and profane, addicted to the frequent violation of the Sabbath, and the habitual neglect of devotion in their families, there is no rashness in the judgment which pronounces them at once irreligious and immoral. If, on the other hand, they have been distinguished for irreproachable morals, unaffected religion in their households, the pious observance of the Lord's day, and a private deportment corresponding to their religious profession, there can remain no doubt that they have the pious and the virtuous qualities required in those who should "*rule over men.*" Besides, "I answer farther," to use the language of Dr. Dwight, "that a steady, regular aim, on the part of a whole nation, or other body politic, to choose virtuous rulers, and none but such as are virtuous, will ordinarily accomplish this invaluable purpose. Should it fail in any instance, the nation will still have done its duty. As to extreme cases, such as those in which no virtuous man can be found to fill the office contemplated, they must occur so rarely, as hardly to require rules of direction. It will always be in the power of a people to select from the candidates the *best man;* and such a selection will, undoubtedly, answer the demands of duty in a case of this nature. The true difficulty does not lie in our inability to determine who are virtuous men, nor

in their want of the proper qualifications for office; but in the want of a fixed and general determination to choose them, in our defective estimate of the importance of virtue to public office, in our preference of *other* qualifications to this, in party attachment, in personal favouritism, and in gross and guilty indifference to the public good. All these are deplorable prejudices, and palpable crimes; miserably weak, as well as dangerously sinful; fraught with innumerable evils, not always immediate perhaps, but always near, certain, and dreadful." *

I shall just add, that the general adoption of the principle argued in this section, would go far to elevate the character of British rulers. How often do we hear, in the circles of pious persons of different ranks, the deep regret expressed, that they so frequently overlook the principles of religion in their private conduct and official transactions! How often do we read, in the periodical prints, the uncontradicted charges, that they occasionally devote the Sabbath to political business,—to public dinners,—and to rural excursions,—a decisive proof that their hearts are not imbued with becoming submission to the authority of the Supreme Potentate who has consecrated that day to religious services! How often do we see recorded, in respectable journals, the lamentations, that in all their deliberations on the gravest questions, they make no *solemn* reference to the sacred volume, and that "a more prominent acknowledgment of *religious principle* on the part of

* Theology, vol. iv. 148, 149.

those who occupy a prominent place in the eyes of the nation, as well as on the part of those who are incessantly pouring in their petitions to the legislature,"* is not given! Now, all these and similar evils must continue to take place, so long as the importance of religious qualifications in the civil rulers is not recognised by the great body of the people. Would they recognise the Bible as the grand criterion of the qualifications requisite in their rulers,—would they, conscientiously, withhold their suffrages from all those whose external actions demonstrate the absence of sound principles,—and would they unanimously insist, that the character of all political transactions shall be tried, according to the unerring requisitions of the divine will; then, after a due interval has elapsed, should we have rulers of a very different description,—rulers who would adorn the stations they occupy with "the beauty of holiness," sanction the laws they pass with the authority of the supreme Ruler, and determine the measures they adopt agreeably to the principles of the inspired volume,—rulers who would exert greater influence on the moral improvement of the community by their good example than by their formal enactments,†

* The Presbyterian Review and Religious Journal, No. I. p. 97. "We are sorry to say," adds this promising Review, "that both on the one side and the other, this is a matter kept entirely out of view. Why should a Christian people ask a boon, or a Christian legislature grant it, without the avowal, that the blessing of the most high God alone can render it a blessing indeed? *It was otherwise in the days of our fathers.*"

† "Princeps optimus," says an ancient Roman, "*faciendo* docet; et licet sit imperio maximus, *exemplo* major est."

implore better councils from heaven by their fervent prayers than they could derive from fallen reason by laborious study, diffuse around them purer happiness by the preservation of honourable peace than could ever accrue from the greatest success in arms, and acquire to themselves, from the free favour of God, immortal dignities and unmingled pleasures when the cares of legislation and the anxieties of empire shall have come to an end.

SECTION VIII.

THE DUTIES OF CITIZENS.

The duties arising out of the relations existing in civil society are not *all* devolved on the rulers. To *them*, it is true, are assigned a very considerable share. We have exhibited in the preceding sections, in different connexions, both the personal qualities with which they should be adorned, and the official duties to which they should devote their best efforts. Some, perhaps, may think we have erred in delineating the character they should maintain, and the conduct they should pursue, so high,—not remembering, that if there be any error in this, they are virtually imputing it to the Bible, from which the whole delineation has been drawn, and not considering that it is the bounden duty of all moralists, not to bring down the standard of virtue to the imperfections of any class, but to excite all classes to the assiduous cultivation of the excellencies required from them respectively by that standard. What we wish, however, to

state in this place is, that *the citizens* of all ranks have duties of great importance and of indispensable obligation, enjoined also upon them. It is to a particular specification, and a brief illustration of these, that we now proceed.

Several particulars which should have been treated under this division, I have, unavoidably, anticipated in the second part of the third section. There, in ascertaining the several senses in which government originates in society, I have shown that it is both their *right* and their *duty* to choose the constitution under which they shall live, and to introduce the successive improvements of which it is susceptible. Not aware that any thing needs to be added to the remarks already made on these two points, either for illustration or argument, I pass on to a variety of other duties which have not yet been urged on the attention of citizens with that particularity which their importance deserves.

1. *The election of their rulers.* The reader will recollect, that this was claimed, in a preceding chapter, as their *right*, subject to certain restrictions. Here it is brought forward under an aspect somewhat different,—a *duty* enforced by moral obligations. And, that it is a duty, in the proper sense of the word, is a primary lesson which all electors should learn. It is not merely a right which they should defend from encroachment—or a privilege which they should use for their private advantage. Some, indeed, seem to view it in this light. Because its exercise, in a proper manner, will neither put sums of money into their pockets, nor secure situations of

profit to their relatives, they speak of it with contempt and indifference, and sometimes with aversion. But others, who have considered the relation in which they stand to their country, the obligations they are under to seek the public good irrespectively of their personal interest, and the important results that may accrue to the community from a judicious choice of rulers, will feel their minds impelled, under a sense of moral obligation, to the right performance of this duty. Nor will they, on any occasion, stay away from the post assigned them by the laws of their country and the sentiments of patriotism, either through an aversion to the unavoidable exertion connected with elections, or through a fear of the unmerited reproach from the tongues or the pens of those who have not discernment enough to appreciate the good selection they have made.

Citizens should take care to "*elect always, as far as may be, rulers possessing the several characteristics mentioned in the preceding*"* section. Either the rulers have duties to perform, or they have not. If they have no duties, why withdraw them from the private stations in which they have been placed, and lavish on them liberal salaries to which they have no moral title? If they *have* duties, why prefer individuals ill-qualified by nature, education, and habits, for the efficient discharge of these duties? It were a monstrous incongruity to appoint a person unacquainted with the elements of Euclid, to teach mathematics,—a coxcomb who had never looked into

* Dwight.

Blackstone, to administer justice,—a pitman who had spent his nights under ground, to read lectures on astronomy,—or a licentiate who had never opened his Bible, except to transcribe the texts assigned him by the Professor of Divinity, to preside over the *religious interests* of a populous parish. Such incongruities as this do sometimes occur. But who does not see the gross impropriety that has been committed in such a case, lament the deplorable consequences to the insulted parishioners who are not instructed, warned, and comforted *from the Scriptures*, and even pity the miserable creature himself who, from the poverty of his unfurnished brain, must read what others wrote, and from the corruption of moral feeling, preaches what he does not believe? Yet something not much less incongruous, criminal, and disgraceful is done, when those are chosen for political rulers who are better acquainted with the arbitrary rules of the *turf* than with the fundamental laws of their country, and more concerned about their private pleasures, than their public duties. Why will not electors learn, that no splendour of rank, no affluence of fortune, no extent of intellectual acquirements in general science, however profound, and no coruscations of eloquence in political debate, however brilliant, can make any man an intelligent, upright, active, and useful ruler? He may be a genuine poet, or a brilliant orator, or a skilful metaphysician, or a classical scholar, or even a learned civilian; and yet prove very ill-informed relative to his appropriate duties, and very inadequate to their efficient performance. Let electors cease to inveigh against the ignorance,

the indolence, and the selfishness of public men, till they themselves have become so virtuous as to give their exclusive support to candidates recommended by the personal qualifications which God has prescribed and revelation has enjoined.

How important is it also, that the electors act *with moral integrity!* Would they remember the importance of the trust with which they are honoured, their responsibility to God for the votes they give, and the interests, not only of the present generation, but of future ages, that must be affected by the choice which they may make, they would scrupulously guard against the ensnaring influence of mercenary considerations. They would indignantly reject the bribes that might be offered to blind their judgments, and corrupt their consciences, whether presented in the shape of pecuniary gratuities, or lucrative births. They would disinterestedly pass over the claims of consanguinity, friendship, and gratitude, unless these claims were accompanied by the superior qualities of ability, piety, and virtue. They would carefully look through the tinsel of a showy exterior into the real character, and distinguish the fair professions of the artful demagogue, from the unassuming worth of the genuine patriot. They would even resist, firmly though respectfully, the undue influence of the first magistrate, should he so far forget the just limits set to his selfish designs, as to attempt controlling their choice either by flattering solicitations or by terrifying threats. Why should they suffer themselves to be turned as a number of passive machines in the hands of unprincipled intriguers; or

driven to the hustings like a flock of cattle which the owner sells to the highest bidder? Will they never learn to exercise their own judgment with becoming freedom—to obey their own conscience with becoming fidelity? Will they never assert the manly independence that befits freemen, and proclaim the unfettered choice that befits moral beings accountable to their Maker? "As," says Blackstone, "it is essential to the very being of Parliament that elections should be absolutely free, therefore all undue influences upon the electors are illegal, and strongly prohibited."*

Though the citizens of this monarchical country have the right of choosing only their parliamentary representatives, they are not deprived of all influence whatever in the choice of the king. "No man," says Blackstone, "that has considered our laws, constitution, and history, without prejudice, will assert, that the doctrine of *hereditary* right does imply an *indefeasible* right to the throne. It is unquestionably in the breast of the supreme legislative authority of this kingdom, the king and both houses of parliament, to defeat this hereditary right; and by parti-

* Vol. i. p. 178. Locke, too, expresses himself in the following terms: "The supreme executor acts contrary to his trust, when he either employs the force, treasure, and offices of the society to corrupt the representatives; or openly pre-engages the electors, and prescribes to their choice such whom he has by solicitations, threats, promises, or otherwise, won to his designs. Thus to regulate candidates and electors, and new-model the ways of election, what is it but to cut up the government by the roots, and poison the very fountain of public security? for the people, having reserved to themselves the choice of their representatives, as the fence to their properties, could do it for no other end, but that they might always be freely chosen."—Vol. v. p. 470.

cular entails, limitations, and provisions, to exclude the immediate heir, and vest the inheritance in any one else. And this is so extremely reasonable, that without such a power, lodged somewhere, our polity would be very defective. For, let us barely suppose so melancholy a case, as that the heir-apparent should be a lunatic, an idiot, or otherwise incapable of reigning: how miserable would the condition of the nation be, if he were also incapable of being set aside! It must be owned," says the same candid civilian, "an elective monarchy seems to be the most obvious, and best suited of any to the rational principles of government, and the freedom of human nature; and, accordingly, we find from history, that, in the infancy and first rudiments of almost every state, the leader, chief magistrate, or prince, hath usually been elective. And, if the individuals who compose that state could always continue true to first principles, uninfluenced by passion or prejudice, unassailed by corruption, and unawed by violence, elective succession were as much to be desired in a kingdom, as in other inferior communities. The best, the wisest, and the bravest man would then be sure of receiving that crown which his endowments have merited; and the sense of an unbiassed majority would be dutifully acquiesced in by the few who were of different opinions. But history and observation will inform us, that elections of every kind, in the present state of human nature, are, too frequently, brought about by influence, partiality, and artifice."*

* Vol. i. 192, 195.

2. *Obedience to their rulers.* That good rulers, chosen by their unbiassed suffrages, or governing with their implied consent, have a *right* to their obedience, none but the friends of entire anarchy will dispute. On what foundation this right rests is the only question that ought to be agitated among rational persons. Now, most evidently, it does not rest on the antiquated absurdity—the arrogant pretence of *divine right.* "The right divine of kings to govern wrong,"—a right which sets aside some of the primary rights of society, which frustrates the principal ends of government, and which stamps the most atrocious offences with the sanction of the divine authority,—cannot be a right derived from the *Divinity,* or entitling to conscientious obedience from the citizens over whom it is, blasphemously, pled. Such a right, indeed, is fast passing into disrepute in this country, before the progress of political truth; nor will the present generation have been gathered to their fathers, before this impious absurdity shall have sunk unhonoured, even with the tears of courtly flatterers, into perpetual oblivion. Neither can we rest their right to obedience on the fiction of an original compact between them and the primitive founders of the state. Such a compact never took place in reality, in any country of which the history reaches back to the earliest period; and, indeed, the national convention necessary to the formation of that mutual contract, "could not be holden, antecedent to the existence of civil government in that country."* Besides, it could not, independently of

* Paley.

the good that might flow from it, possess the smallest obligation on the present race, who are warranted to assert their own rights irrespectively of the encroachments of a former generation, and who are capable of consulting, for their own interests, under *superior* guidance, if political knowledge have made the slightest progress.

But, there are two other grounds on which we would prefer placing the right of virtuous governors to conscientious obedience. These are, the *divine authority*—and *public utility*. 1st, Divine authority demands such obedience from all citizens. God, the great patron of virtue, order, harmony, and happiness throughout his numerous dominions, has not left this matter to their mere discretion. He has not referred it to their erring judgments, their irregular inclinations, or their fluctuating views of public expediency. He has interposed *his own will* in express precepts, of which the meaning is perfectly clear, the obligation absolutely indispensable, and the sanctions presented to the conscience, strikingly solemn. "*Let every soul,*" says Paul, "*be subject unto the higher powers; for there is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever, therefore, resisteth that power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation; for rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.*"* "*Submit yourselves,*" says Peter,

* Romans xiii. 1, 2, 3, 5.

"*to every ordinance of man, for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king as supreme; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him, for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well-doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: as free, and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God.*"* "*Put them in mind,*" is an injunction addressed to all the ministers of religion, "*put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work.*"† 2d, Public utility inculcates the same moral duty. It is impossible to estimate the advantages that accrue to a country from the universal prevalence of obedience to its righteous laws. Order, peace, and prosperity prevail; arts are improved by new inventions; trades are pursued with spirit; sciences are investigated without interruption; the solemnities of religion obtain some measure of the respect due to their sacred character, and their beneficial influence; and, while the streams of wealth pour in through innumerable channels, every one obtains his proper share awarded according to his previous industry, and enjoyed in perfect security, uninterrupted by any of those *great* reverses that usually accompany national revolt. Hence arises an obligation to obey, which men of virtuous minds cannot resist. "That the power of the sovereign exists by our will, is not enough of itself to confer on us the right of disobeying it;

* 1 Peter ii. 13—16. † Titus iii. 1.

and this for a very plain reason, that the disobedience may be productive of misery, which, even the slave of a bad government has no right to produce. Our duties are not all dependant on our mere power, or our mere will. I have no moral right to produce that wild disorder, which mere disobedience to law, if general, would occasion,—still less to produce that bloodshed, and the desolation, and the bad passions, worse than mere bloodshed and desolation, which would be the inevitable consequence of a long protracted civil dissension. It is our duty to obey, because mankind—at least that large part of mankind which we term our country—would suffer, upon the whole, if we were not to obey. This is the powerful hold which even imperfect governments possess on the obedience of the wise and good; and the stronger holds which they may seem to have, by corruption, or by mere usage of unreflecting veneration, on the profligate and the ignorant, is truly not half so strong."*

Our obedience to virtuous rulers, claimed on these two grounds, ought to be *intelligent.* None of our actions can be accounted truly virtuous, unless they spring from good principles in the heart, under the influence of correct views in the understanding. Within certain limits, the correct enlightenment of the understanding, on moral subjects, is necessary both to the cultivation of virtuous feelings, and the performance of virtuous actions. Accordingly, that our obedience to the civil authorities placed over us,

* Brown's Lectures, vol. iv. 369, 378.

agreeably to the will of God, may be in itself virtuous, we must have our minds furnished with some measure of correct information. We must have some acquaintance with the leading principles, objects, and difficulties of government,—with the personal qualities of the individuals holding offices,—with the grounds on which they are entitled to our willing submission,—and with the obligations we are under not to violate a single law which they promulgate, unless we are certain of its inconsistency with the dictates of the Divine will. How different the obedience we are thus prepared to render, from that of the *ignorant* who obey from mere *prejudice*, entertained without any efforts to ascertain its truth or its falsehood—of the *superstitious*, who, under the impression of superior sacredness belonging to their persons, come crouching with the tribute of unreflecting veneration—and of the *stupid*, who, incapable of accurate discrimination, and destitute of manly independence, can fall down, in base servility, before *any* rulers, however profligate their character, and pernicious their reign.

Our obedience should be also *conscientious*. Conscience, carefully instructed from the word of God, and impressed with the moral obligation arising from the sources formerly mentioned, ought to constrain us to yield to good rulers what stands so high in the scale of moral duties. It should remind us, on all occasions, that, in obeying them, we are obeying *Him* who has delegated them as his temporary vicegerents in a particular province of his empire, and who has prescribed the laws which they are employed in pro-

pagating, expounding, and administering. It should prompt us to obedience, in all circumstances,—in our private affairs as well as in our public business,—in our commercial dealings as well as in our civil relations,—in marching to the cannon's mouth when called to defend the liberties of our country, no less than in managing our peaceful avocations, that expose neither to the privations of the tented field, nor to the perils of the mortal conflict. How superior were such obedience to that of the *selfish* who bend their necks to the yoke, with apparent submission, merely that they may acquire the greater share of the riches, honours, and pleasures upon which they are intent,—of the *indolent*, who crouch under their burdens, with seeming alacrity, merely that they may avoid the exertions necessary to throw them off,—and of those *pretended loyalists*, who, while they are deafening all around them with their hypocritical clamour about *obedience for conscience sake*, can, even on system, defraud the revenue, by an illicit traffic carried on in secrecy, to the utmost extent of their power, and supported in full operation by a series of deceptions, prevarications, and perjuries, before which all reference to conscience becomes downright hypocrisy.

In fine, our obedience ought ever to be *regulated according to the laws of Revelation.* Since these laws have emanated from the Almighty Ruler in the heavens,—since they are the very laws according to which we shall be judged in the day of final retribution,—since, moreover, they are stamped with an intrinsic excellence that has never been transferred, except in a very inferior degree, to any enactments

of merely human origin, nothing seems more reasonable, than that they should receive the decided *preference.* "*We ought to obey God rather than men.*"* With regard to all those points that are in themselves indifferent, and that cannot be determined, either by the divine law written in the Scriptures, or by the natural law inscribed on the conscience, I would allow rulers to go any length warranted by public expediency, in making laws; and I would inculcate on the community the duty of punctual, prompt, and cheerful obedience. I would not cease to impress the community with the paramount importance of compliance even with the artificial regulations adopted for the common good, and of abstinence even from all those originally indifferent points that have, at different times, for wise ends, been declared criminal by legislative authority. But, the moment anything evidently inconsistent with the law of God, is required by rulers, that moment they forfeit their right to obedience, because they have violated the trust committed to them on their assuming office, placed their will above the authority of the Supreme Potentate under whom they were employed, and commanded sin, the conscientious avoidance of which is a duty of inviolable obligation in all circumstances whatsoever. "*Subjects,*" says Dr. Dwight, whose remarks on *this* point I prefer to any which I could offer, "*subjects are bound to obey magistrates when acting agreeably to the laws, in all cases not contrary to the will of God, as unfolded in the scrip-*

* Acts v. 29.

tures. This I take to be the true import of the directions given by St. Peter and St. Paul. These apostles cannot, I think, be rationally supposed to enjoin upon subjects obedience to those commands of a ruler which contravene the laws of the land; or which lie beyond the limits of his lawful authority. They require our obedience to the magistrate, *acting as a magistrate*, or within the limits of his lawful authority; and not to the magistrate, *transgressing the bounds of law*, and acting merely as a private individual, according to the dictates of his own discretion, caprice, or whim. Much less can they be supposed to require our obedience to those commands of a ruler which are opposed to the law of God. Whether we should "obey God rather than men," can never be seriously made a question by common sense, any more than by piety."*

3. *Citizens are bound to pay taxes.* Taxes are a certain portion of their property, levied, by law, for the management of the affairs of the state. They are imposed, at the pleasure of the legislature, on lands, houses, money, and numerous articles of commerce, domestic and foreign. From what sources arise the *moral obligation* to pay them, in a cheerful manner, is a question which concerns the *consciences* of good men, and which may be answered in the following manner:

The divine authority commands this duty. He who has laid the foundation of society in the original principles of our constitution, who has prescribed the

* Vol. iv. 149, 150.

purest maxims of government in revelation, and who retains an absolute control over the wealth which he has distributed, through innumerable channels, over the whole kingdom, in very different proportions,—*He* has required citizens to perform this duty, from regard to his supreme will, for the public good. "*For this cause pay you tribute also; for they are God's ministers, attending continually on this very thing. Render, therefore, to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom.*"* Hence, when taxes are levied, by the approved representatives, on proper objects, for legitimate purposes, pious citizens will feel their minds prompting them to punctual payments, under the influence of pious respect for his authority, grateful submission to his law, and enlightened zeal for his honour.

The performance of this duty is enforced by *justice.* Are the *servants* employed in our families, by mutual contract, entitled to wages proportioned to the worth of the services which they render? Are the *operatives* engaged in our factories for specified work, entitled to rewards proportioned to the skill, the strength, and the time, they have spent for our profit? Are the *tradesmen,* from whom we have ordered articles of utility or ornament, entitled to full payment for the efforts they have employed, and the expenses they have incurred in their production? Equally well-founded in equity is the moral right of all *rulers,* in all branches of good government, to adequate remuneration for the important duties they

* Rom. xiii. 6, 7.

perform. When it is considered, that they have been appointed to offices beneficial to the whole community,—that success in these requires the undivided application of their powers, resources, and opportunities,—and that the qualifications which they have brought to the service of their country were not acquired, without years of diligent study and considerable expenditure, who does not see that they are entitled, on the principles of mere justice, to liberal allowances—allowances fixed at a happy medium between the parsimony that would involve them in pecuniary embarrassments inconsistent with the vigorous discharge of their duties, and from the extravagance that might allure them into expensive pleasures injurious to the interests of public morals?

Patriotism, too, further enforces the payment of tribute. Since rulers are nominated to offices instituted for the promotion of the general good, they are required to undertake many measures, to the successful execution of which many persons are, in various ways, necessary. How important for advancing the intellectual, moral and religious improvement of the community, that schools, colleges, churches, and libraries be put on an efficient footing! How important for protecting property, liberty and life, against the inroads of injustice, fraud, and violence, that the courts of law be furnished with well-qualified officers! How important for encouraging the progress of trade in all its useful branches, and turning to the greatest account the peculiar resources of the country, that roads be improved, canals cut, railways laid down, and other in-

ternal improvements executed! How important, in a word, for a nation's defence, both against the insurrection of turbulent subjects, and the incursion of neighbouring states, that fortresses be erected in proper positions, troops supported on an adequate scale, and even a navy, in the case of an island surrounded with the sea, manned to the requisite extent! But never can these objects be secured, in the degree requisite to the general interest of the whole commonwealth, unless revenues are contributed in a measure corresponding to their magnitude, difficulty of execution, and price of labour.*

At the same time, it should be observed, that the *smallest amount of taxes* compatible with the real efficiency of the national establishments, ought to be exacted. To exact more evinces injustice in the public representatives, encroaches on the natural distribution of capital throughout the community, and excites the complaints even of the most virtuous members, who never utter a murmur against their rulers, unless they see just cause. Nor are their complaints in this case unreasonable. When they see the produce of their arduous toils diminished by taxes levied for purposes foreign to the public weal, —when they see the functionaries of the executive magistracy allotting to themselves salaries far more than equal to the worth of their services,—when they see nominal offices perpetuated for the mere purpose of allowing their mean-spirited occupants to draw

* "Government cannot be supported without great charge; and it is fit, every one who enjoys his share of the protection, should pay out of his estate his proportion for the maintenance of it." Locke, vol. v. 422.

the emoluments attached to them,—and, in a word, when they see thousands, wrung from the scanty earnings of patient industry, bestowed, in the shape of pensions, on persons *most* of whom have never rendered any service whatever to the country, upon which they could found a moral claim to these gratuitous allowances,—it is *not* unreasonable, that they should spurn the base adulation so common in the purlieus of royal courts, and express, in plain terms, their sense of the manifest injustice with which *they* are treated, and the unmerited partiality with which others are favoured.

Neither are intelligent citizens to be blamed, when they murmur at the injudicious manner in which taxes have been frequently imposed. That they should be imposed on luxuries rather than on necessaries,—so adjusted "as to give the least possible obstruction to those means of subsistence by which the mass of the community is maintained,"—so arranged as "to rise upon the different classes of the community in a much higher ratio than the simple proportion of their incomes,"—and so accommodated to local peculiarities as to improve the morals of the people, by discouraging the existing allurements to vice,*—these are very plain maxims in political economy. But if, in utter disregard of these axioms, supported by such men as Paley, and Smith, and

* Paley says, with his usual energy, "Taxes may be so adjusted as to conduce to the restraint of luxury, and the correction of vice; to the encouragement of industry, trade, agriculture, and marriage. Taxes thus contrived, become rewards and penalties; not only sources of revenue, but instruments of police."—Works, 157.

Ricardo, and Macculloch, modern financiers proceed in the course which their predecessors have trod,—if they enhance the price of some of the most necessary articles, by perpetuating the imposts they now pay,—if they obstruct the channels through which the streams of useful intelligence should flow, by immoderate duties on newspapers,—if, for the sake of any party, they impose restrictions on any of those branches of industry from which the mass of the population derive the means of subsistence,—let them not be surprised, should they hear, from the lips of a people growing every year in acquaintance with their just rights, expressions both of bitter disappointment and of strong disapprobation.

But, at the same time, citizens should beware, lest they have recourse to dishonourable acts, in order to avoid the payment of just burdens. Some there are, in particular trades, who think they are not chargeable with any moral offence, when they have succeeded in sending out from their factories, or in bringing within their premises, goods upon which the duties, imposed by legislative enactment, have not been paid. They can even rejoice over the ingenious manœuvres by which they have defeated the vigilance of the revenue officers, and smile at the repeated perjuries by which they have eluded the penalties of outraged laws. But have these men consciences? Have they forgotten the unceasing inspection of the omniscient witness to which they are exposed, and the final award of divine justice with which they are threatened? Far from genuine Christians will be *such* conduct. Even while they

may consider the duties exigible much greater than either justice or policy warrants, and while they feel that whatever amount they can withhold from the revenue is just so much added to their capital, *they* will scrupulously shun all those frauds which many others practise without any apparent remorse, remembering, that " to imposts, even of an oppressive nature, but not exacted expressly for an immoral purpose, nor required as a tessera of subjection to authority, Christians may submit for '*wraths sake.*'"

4. *Citizens are bound to honour their rulers.* It is of importance to distinguish the genuine honour to which rulers are entitled from the spurious homage with which they have very frequently been insulted. Let me say, then, *that* honour does not consist merely in external offices of respect, with whatever punctuality they are performed. A man may go through all the forms of etiquette with the ease of a practised courtier,—he may, on public occasions, offer all the genuflexions, congratulations, and obeisances that royalty has ever claimed,—he may, at all times, speak of royalty with the most profound reverence, bordering on servile applause, from which rational discrimination has been completely banished,—he may even apply to royalty the same titles that have been given to the Supreme Being, with an outward solemnity that narrow observers may not find in his demeanour towards the Supreme Being,—and after all fall short of the duty in question. That duty pre-supposes corresponding emotions in our minds, —*esteem, affection,* and *reverence,*—emotions arising from the contemplation of the private worth, public

station, and extensive usefulness of good rulers, and showing themselves in that respectful, yet dignified, behaviour which indicates a happy medium between crouching servility on the one hand, and rude independence on the other.

"That we are under *moral obligations* to pay this honour to virtuous rulers, may appear from various considerations. It is *enjoined* by the highest authority in the universe. "*Honour the King.*" "*Render to all their dues,—fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour.*" It is the declared will of Him in whose name they rule over men, that we should suppress all mean thoughts and malignant feelings regarding them,—cherish just conceptions of their true dignity, and a due estimation of their moral worth,—and observe all the innocent expressions of regard for their character, station, and reputation that are customary in the country in which our lot has been cast, and common to the classes to which we belong. Such honour is *deserved.* Without attributing to them any superior dignity of nature, or any peculiar delegation from the Deity, we must hold, that they are deserving of no common distinction. When we survey the private excellence which they are ever careful to cultivate, the elevated station which they adorn as much by their virtues as by their talents, the important benefits they confer as well by their private influence as by their public acts, and the distinguished favour God bestows upon them in the success of their patriotic measures, and the deference of surrounding governments, we should offer violence to our most approved feelings, did we

withhold the usual expressions of honour to which they possess such an ample title.

The honour, enforced by such obligations as those just mentioned, ought to be *enlightened.* The blind homage offered by the ignorant beings that approach most of the oriental princes, and some of the European monarchs, is exceedingly disgusting to rulers whose own minds have been enlarged by instructive studies, and warmed by generous emotions. *They* have no pleasure in the flattering homage of abject creatures who come before them with the trembling hesitancy of slaves, who gaze upon them with unreflecting veneration, and who seem to court further degradation by their stupid admiration of mere power. *They* would much rather see their subjects asserting the dignity of thinking beings, acquainting themselves with their political rights, emerging from the debasing credulity in which they have been kept in darker ages, casting away the trammels of enslaving prejudices with which courtiers have long bound them, and bringing the simple, the sincere, and manly tribute of rational respect unpolluted with the incense of servile adulation. Would that all rulers were animated with this noble spirit, productive of effects so creditable to their own character, and so conducive to the interests of their subjects.

Subjects should also see, that the honour they pay their rulers be consistent with *that* which they owe the Almighty. Such has been the unthinking veneration cherished, in past ages, for them, that the language in which they have usually been addressed can scarcely be vindicated from the charge of *pro-*

fanity. "In hereditary monarchies," says Paley, "the *prescriptive title* is corroborated, and its influence considerably augmented, by an accession of religious sentiments, and by that sacredness which men are wont to ascribe to the persons of princes. Princes themselves have not failed to take advantage of this disposition, by claiming a superior dignity, as it were, of nature, or a peculiar delegation from the Supreme Being. For this purpose men introduced the titles of Sacred Majesty, of God's Anointed, Representative, Vicegerent, together with the ceremonies of investitures and coronations, which are calculated not so much to recognise the authority of sovereigns as to consecrate their persons."* "The feudal nobles," says Dr. Lardner, "in place of the real merit which they did not possess, substituted the fictitious merit of proud and lofty attributes, which they exaggerated even to the ridiculous,—still more,—even to profanation. They usurped the honours rendered to the Divinity; they claimed a participation in the incense which was burned upon the altars; they adorned themselves with the titles ascribed to the Supreme Being."† Let citizens beware of

* Works, pages 100, 101.

† Cabinet Library, vol. vi. One almost blushes for his country,—the country that gave birth to Bruce and Wallace, to Knox and Melville,—when he reads, in the same volume, from the pen of a respectable Englishman, the following *well-founded* charge:—"In Scotland it was carried on to an extent truly ridiculous. Every thing there, clothed with a little brief authority, and rejoicing for the moment in the pompous insolence of office, has been honoured with the *lordly* appellation,—an appellation which *God*, from the most remote antiquity down to the present time, has received and receives. Besides their Lords Provosts, they have their Lords of Session, their Lord Advocate," their Lords Dean of Guild, their Lord Rectors, and formerly their "Lords of the Articles."

the impiety involved in transferring the homage they owe the Divinity to the subordinate rulers whom he has employed; and while they use the external tokens of respect which are permitted, by christianity, to the higher orders, let them remember that there presides over the universe a Supreme Potentate, who will not allow the honours due to himself to be given, even to the mightiest monarch, with impunity.

Revelation prohibits, in peremptory terms, various *practices* that are inconsistent with the honour due to civil rulers. "*Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people.*" "*Presumptuous are they; self-willed; they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities.*" "*Curse not the king, no, not in thy thought, and curse not the rich in thy bed-chamber; for a bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter.*"* Citizens are, no doubt, allowed the right of remonstrating with rulers on the faults into which they fall; and when they do this, from pure principles, for good ends, and in a becoming manner, they render an important service to their country. They may thus arrest them in a line of crooked policy most disastrous to the national interests, and most fatal to their own reputation for sagacity, justice, and patriotism. But, how many are there who, in pronouncing censures on them, are actuated by the worst motives, governed by the basest passions, and aiming at the wildest results! How many others are there who recklessly seize on the

* Acts xxiii. 5. 2 Peter ii. 10. Eccles. x. 20.

private blemishes which are common, in this state of imperfection, to all classes,—who rashly impute sinister designs even when subsequent proceedings have disclosed judicious measures,—who intemperately cry out against occasional failures that have arisen from unexpected contingencies rather than from the misapplication of existing means,—and who wickedly assail, with unmerited abuse, the most salutary restraints with which authority would curb their irregular passions, and stop their criminal courses. "*These are the murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lust; who despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities.*"

I shall only add on this particular, that there is a degree of outward respect due even to wicked rulers. No doubt, when misrule has risen to such a height, that armed resistance has become a duty, the usual offices of respect cease to be any longer due to them. Still, so long as they are permitted to hold the reins of government, without any regular effort to depose them from seats they are unworthy to occupy, they are entitled to these offices, so far as they do not involve a dereliction of scriptural principles, a violation of moral duties, or an acknowledgment of usurped authority. How admirably was this exemplified by the three Hebrew princes on the plain of Dura! Though Nebuchadnezzar commanded them to fall down before the image of gold which had been erected as a magnificent idol, and though he threatened their refusal with a cruel death in the fiery furnace, "heated seven times more than it was wont to be heated," they were prompted, by influence great-

er than human, to resist the iniquitous edict with a noble intrepidity, accompanied with a measure of respect becoming the high station which he still occupied. They do not call him either tyrant, or idolater, or oppressor, though, in fact, he was all the three. With singular discretion, they address him in these words, which had never before fallen upon his ears,—"*O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter: if it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king,*"*—words exhibiting a union of fidelity with courtesy, of fortitude with mildness, of stern resistance to an unrighteous order, with becoming respect to an acknowledged monarch, that deserves to be held up to the admiration and imitation of persecuted believers in all ages and countries.

5. *Citizens are bound to pray for their rulers.* The obligations to this duty we do not trace to any appointment that has ever been made in the courts of princes. It is true, they have frequently commanded the ministers of religion to remember this service in their pulpits, and have even furnished them with particular forms of prayer, from which they were not to deviate under pain of royal displeasure. But, as they have done this, without any moral right vested in them, for this purpose, by the Deity,—as they can plead no other than some sort of permission from a portion of their subjects who can show no authority from Him for granting it,—

* Daniel iii. 16, 17.

and as the practice is of pernicious tendency, both by fostering an arbitrary spirit in the breast of rulers, and encouraging an immoral subserviency in the conduct of religious teachers, it does not appear, that any orders they may issue, on this devotional duty, can have the smallest *moral* obligation on any class of citizens. And, ministers who refuse compliance with such orders, rather than betray the sacred trust committed to them by their divine Master, and spurn the royal favours—*the regia dona*—offered with the insidious design of purchasing unconditional submission, rather than sacrifice the scriptural independence of the church of whose spiritual rights they are the appointed guardians,—are guiltless of moral wrong in the sight of God, and free of compunctious visitings in their bosoms, by so doing.

Still, there *are* obligations to prayer for civil rulers which pious subjects will not resist. The *primary* obligation arises from that authority to which we have traced many other obligations in the course of this performance, and from which all moral rights do originally spring,—the authority of God. *His* authority, on this point, has been expressed, with perfect clearness, not only in the general precepts which require all men to pray for each other, but also in a particular command in which those invested with civil dominion, from the chief magistrate to the lowest officer, are distinctly specified. "*I exhort, therefore,*" says the herald of heaven, "*that first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men; for kings and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet*

*and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth."**

A *secondary* obligation arises from the *approved* example of eminent believers under the Jewish economy. The good actions performed by these men, in different departments of life, have been recorded in the Scriptures, for instructing us in our various duties and stimulating us to their conscientious observance. "*Take,*" says James, "*the prophets who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience.*" "*For whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning; that we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope.*"† Now, did not the prophets, in whatever circumstances they were placed, pray for the various orders of rulers under whom they were living? What are the copious supplications uttered by them in the most trying emergencies, ascending warm from their pious hearts, on behalf of their "princes who had not hearkened to the voice of the Lord," and recorded, under divine direction, in several books of the Old Testament,‡ but so many *models of fervent prayer for rulers,* exhibited in the temple of Divine truth for the imitation of virtuous citizens in all succeeding ages?

Enforced by such obligations, this duty is required

* 1 Tim. ii. 1—4. † James v. 10. Rom. xv. 4.

‡ Let the reader turn up Ezra ix. 5—15. Nehem. ix. 32—37. Dan. ix. 3—19.

from citizens of *every class*. How the performance of it should have been devolved, in certain countries, on the ministers of religion alone, even as the organs of their respective congregations, can be more easily explained than justified. Are not *all* classes concerned, in one way or another, in the appointment of the rulers? Are not *all* dependent on them, to a certain extent, for the protection of their social rights and the prosperity of their public interests? Ought not *all* to cherish in their bosoms sentiments of esteem, affection, and submission, corresponding to their private qualities and their official acts? Ought not *all* to feel a benevolent solicitude for the advancement of their temporal welfare, the prosperity of their just undertakings, and the salvation of their immortal souls? *Why*, then, should not *all*,—the individual in his chamber, the parent in his family, kneeling before the domestic altar, and the Christian in the private societies held on week days for religious conference, reading, and prayer, as well as the minister officiating on the Lord's-day before his assembled flock,—offer such prayers on behalf of their governors, as the Bible might suggest to persons acquainted with the particular circumstances of the country, and the particular proceedings of the government? "*These are the words of the letter sent to the priests, and to the prophets, and* TO ALL THE PEOPLE, *saying, Seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the Lord for it; for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace.*"*

* Jerem. xxix. 1, 7.

Christians are not exempted from this duty, even when they are suffering under bad rulers. No doubt they should act in this matter, as in all others, with discrimination, conscientiousness, and fidelity. If prayer is demanded from them as a test of passive subjection to arbitrary power, and of unqualified approbation of oppressive proceedings, it is their bounden duty, and will be their peculiar honour, to refuse it. Or if any order is issued requiring them to implore success in a crusade against the just rights of neighbouring kingdoms, in conquests that trample down the privileges of unoffending states, in encroachments on the inherent liberties of the Christian church, or in any other course inconsistent with the principles of justice, humanity, and religion,—then, ought they to disobey that order, whatever inconveniences may follow, both because it is an order which no civil rulers had any authority to give, and because compliance with it would involve in obvious criminality. But, when no sinful conditions are annexed to this service, then are they not only warranted, but also bound, to offer *suitable* prayers expressive of the benevolent desires with which they regard their present oppressors. That God would open their minds to see the wicked career they are pursuing, and the increasing wretchedness they are spreading—that He would restrain their guilty excesses with the same power that checks the fury of the hurricane, the pestilence, and other physical instruments of divine vengeance—that He would overrule the calamities which they are bringing on their people, for the correction of past evils, and the pro-

duction of future amendment—and that he would awaken their own minds to genuine penitence by faith in the blood of the Redeemer, before they are snatched away from privileges which they are neglecting, and consigned to sufferings from which there is no deliverance—these are some of the important objects which they should seek by appropriate petitions, and humble confessions, offered with becoming importunity at the throne of grace.

There are several other points of this subject on which it might be expected I should touch; but on these, I find, I cannot enter without reiterating the very remarks which were made by me in a recent publication.* Referring the reader to these, instead of transcribing them into this place, I go on to add, that,

6. *Citizens are bound to remonstrate with their rulers on the evils they commit.* This, no doubt, is a service, the performance of which cannot be expected to prove so acceptable to them as the others that have been mentioned. No class of men like to have their faults urged on their notice with too much freedom; and, of all the classes that can be named, princes are the least disposed to view, with favour, even the salutary remonstrances to which their conduct may give rise. Much rather would they be addressed, if not with the courtly adulation to which they have been accustomed from the remotest times, and to which they naturally imagine they have a *prescriptive* title, yet in those unmeaning generalities

* Vindication of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, pp. 43—57.

that never call up before their minds the *particular* errors into which they have been betrayed, and which it is their indispensable duty to rectify without delay. But there is a moral duty incumbent on citizens, from which such predilections can never absolve them—*free, faithful, respectful communication with their rulers.* Instead of regarding this as a mere *right* which they may forego in indolence, or cowardice, or sycophancy, at their own pleasure, they ought to feel it as an important *duty,* the omission of which would justly subject them to a charge of criminal indifference to the public interests, and ultimately expose them to a variety of national sufferings. The obligations to this duty are various.

How can virtuous citizens have the *approbation of their own consciences,* if they do not warn, in a proper manner, their rulers? Suppose a master saw his servants daily neglecting his work, for which they have been hired, trifling away their time in childish diversions or in sluggish inactivity, anxious chiefly for the term when they shall receive their *undeserved* salaries, would he be altogether innocent, if he never took the trouble to remonstrate with them on the very improper manner in which they were acting? Would he not, on the contrary, be exceedingly guilty, both in suffering his temporal interests to be sacrificed without an adequate cause, and in allowing his servants to acquire evil habits without seasonable warning? Upon what principle then, can we reckon any people guiltless who permit their civil rulers to run a career of political profligacy unchecked by intelligent, urgent, and respected remonstrance? When

they remember, that these rulers occupy seats to which they have been raised, with *their* implied concurrence, obtain from *them* the resources with which they purchase their splendid pleasures, and prosecute their ruinous wars, and perpetrate, by their connivance, the gross crimes that awaken general abhorrence and occasion extensive suffering, surely they ought to feel the temporizing silence they have maintained an offence of no ordinary enormity, for which conscience should chastise them with sharp rebukes, and providence *will* punish them with severe calamities.

Hence a second consideration occurs—that a *regard to the public interests of the country* should prompt citizens to remonstrate against the evil acts of their rulers. Nothing, except force, is better calculated to arrest them in their guilty course, than simultaneous remonstrances, sensible, argumentative, earnest, and pointed, from all quarters of the kingdom. Should these not restrain them within the bounds of the constitution which they have been chosen to administer, they will, at least, haunt them, in their criminal aberrations, with fears that shall shake their guilty resolutions and paralyze their traitorous arms. On the other hand, unbroken silence, perpetuated for any length of time, would encourage them in their evil courses,—fortify their minds against the upbraidings of outraged consciences,—and, interpreted as a proof either of cordial acquiescence or stoical indifference, would stimulate them to increased efforts to consummate their own aggrandizement on the ruins of their country. As-

suredly, if citizens are not entirely bereft of all concern for the welfare of their nation, of themselves, and of posterity, in temporal interests and in religious matters, they will not neglect to approach the throne, through all the channels open to them, with remonstrances, which, couched in terms that courtiers seldom utter, and breathing a spirit that the atmosphere of courts never fosters, will make the tyrant tremble mid his astonished counsellors, and shrink from the execution of his nefarious projects with a cowardice that never fails to accompany heartless cruelty.

I would inculcate this duty also by a benevolent *regard to the welfare of rulers themselves.* It is not kindness on our part to suffer any class of men to persevere, without warnings which we are warranted to give, in a course discreditable to themselves and destructive to others. How great, then, must be our unkindness to rulers, who have peculiar difficulties to struggle with, if we do not, with becoming freedom, warn them of the iniquities into which they are running, and of the perils to which they are exposing themselves! Is it not pitiable to see them placed in the most trying situations to which men can be raised, sometimes without judicious advice, and often without correct information respecting the circumstances, the opinions, and the wishes of the community? Does it not increase one's pity to think, that there are about thrones so few, generally speaking, who are honest enough to tell them the real facts, and give them faithful counsels,—and so many who scruple not, from false timidity or base adulation, to assure them that they enjoy universal

esteem, and afford unbounded satisfaction, even while the provincial authorities can scarcely prevent open insurrection and general revolt. I say, then, it is an act of the truest kindness, on the part of the people, to lift their voice, through whatever medium they can reach, to the throne, the nobles, and the great officers of state, and to tell them plainly and firmly, though respectfully, the evils which they are bringing on the country which they misgovern, the dangers that threaten the extinction of the powers which they misapply, and the reforms by the concession of which alone they can hope ever to recover the popular favour they have lost.

While this is the indispensable duty of *all* citizens, there is one class who seem under peculiar obligations to perform it as opportunities offer,—I mean the ministers of religion, who are, by office, the guardians of divine truth, pure morality, and rational liberty. To these men has been committed a most important function, instituted for the noblest purposes, and capable of exerting, if duly performed, a most salutary influence on the cause of national prosperity as well as on that of vital religion. There is no class too high in rank for the messages with which they are intrusted, the warnings they are employed to tender, and the spiritual blessings they are commissioned to offer, by the authority of their Divine Master. Even princes in their palaces, with all the insignia of royalty about their persons, and all the proofs of devotion by their subjects flowing in upon them, are not to be exempted from the spirit-

ual instructions adapted to their condition as perishing sinners, or from the faithful reproofs required by their conduct as imperfect rulers. Such exemption was not permitted in the case of any of the Jewish princes, however unacceptable to some might be the addresses of their faithful monitors. See the prophet *Elijah* firmly repelling the charge brought against him by Ahab, "*Art thou he that troubleth Israel?*" and nobly retorting the accusation on that iniquitous monarch himself, "*I have not troubled Israel, but thou and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baalim.*"* See *Nehemiah*, with an intrepidity that was crowned with much success under the smiles of heaven, remonstrating, first "*with the rulers*" for the keeping back the portions of the Levites which should have been offered punctually, and then "*with the nobles of Judah*" for the flagrant desecration of the Sabbath which they encouraged, by their own ungodly practice, to the peculiar detriment of the nation upon which they thus brought "*more wrath.*"† See *Jeremiah*, with an earnestness mellowed by protracted sorrows on account of national degeneracy, addressing "*the word of the Lord to the kings of Judah,*" dissuading them from the violations of the Sabbath either by business or pleasure, very common in great cities, with the sanction of many conspicuous examples, and announcing to them, that if they would "*not hearken*" to these dissuasives

* 1 Kings xviii. 17, 18. † Nehem. xiii. 10—22.

proclaimed from heaven, God should "*kindle a fire that would devour the palaces of Jerusalem.*"* See *Daniel,* with a fortitude unsubdued by the fierce looks of the haughty tyrant of Chaldea, telling him the awful degradation he was about to suffer till he should "*know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men,*" and urging on him an admonition that had never before fallen upon his ears,—"*Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by showing mercy to the poor, if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity.*"† Nor can it be alleged, that this duty was limited to the Jewish prophets. Christian ministers, even in the altered circumstances in which they have been placed, are bound, by explicit obligations recognised in the

* Jerem. xvii. 19—27.—"The degree of strictness with which this ordinance is observed, or the contrary, is a good test of the degree of spiritual religion that is any land. But, by this rule, how awful is our condition in this nation, especially in the metropolis, and its environs. Various secular employments, and some not fit to be tolerated on any day, are openly conducted on it; and, probably, more open licentiousness and impiety are perpetrated on the Lord's-day than on all the rest. If this matter have a similar connexion with our national peace and prosperity as it had with those of Judah, we have need to take heed to ourselves, and to fear lest a fire should be kindled in our gates to devour our most magnificent palaces, in too many of which God's holy day is more daringly violated than in almost any of the houses of the poor. *It behoves the ministers of religion in every place to sound the alarm in this matter,* that all who go in and out at our gates may hear; and that rulers, magistrates, and all the inhabitants of the land, by their authority, influence, and example, may combine to check the progress of this growing evil; that so true religion may revive, general reformation may take place, our national prosperity may be preserved and increased, and, above all, that the souls of men may be led into the ways of eternal salvation." —*Scott's Observations on the Passage.*

† Daniel iv. 25, 27.

New Testament, to attend to its performance. When the Saviour sent forth his twelve apostles, did not he give them this warning, "*Ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a* TESTIMONY AGAINST THEM AND THE GENTILES?"* When he afterwards assured the general body of the disciples, that they should encounter persecution, at different periods, did he not repeat, with peculiar reference to their teachers, who must always appear in the front ranks among the faithful sufferers, "*and ye shall be brought before rulers and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them?*"† And, in one word, after the ascension, when he had furnished his servants with power for the arduous enterprise to which they had been summoned, did not he direct Peter to set an example to succeeding teachers, by the faithful publication even of unwelcome truths to the multitudes who came before them, and by the fearless imputation to "*the kings of the earth*" of the offences against the Redeemer of which they had been notoriously guilty?‡

In remonstrating with rulers on the evils with which they are chargeable, private citizens and public teachers would do well to attend to the following rules. 1*st*, *Let them act with studied discretion.* Considerable allowance should be made for the imperfections they possess in common with their fellow-creatures, for the evils into which they fall, evidently from inconsideration, or inadvertence, or unavoidable ignorance, and for the peculiar difficulties with

* Matth. x. 18. † Mark xiii. 9. ‡ Acts iv. 8—30.

which they are surrounded in their elevated offices. The most favourable construction should always be put upon their words, and the most laudable motives assigned for their actions. All injurious surmises, which the clearer evolution of their plans, or the future course of events, may prove to have been groundless, ought to be carefully suppressed. Even *when* they have committed an error deserving severe reprehension, both on account of the bad intentions, and the injurious effects, instead of making it the theme of angry vituperation in the clubs of unprincipled demagogues, or of unchristian invective in the pulpits of religious instructors, it should be made the topic of grave, and enlightened, and earnest remonstrances, written in language becoming the courtesies of social life, and presented in the proper quarters, with the honest frankness suited to the independence of intelligent freemen. *2d, Let them act also with uncompromising fidelity.* Intrusted with the defence of their social rights,—their political privileges,—they should feel the obligations they are under to guard against treachery, " detestable neutrality," and degrading subserviency. Of what use is the right of petitioning the throne, or the parliament, if they do not remonstrate, with earnestness, decision, and perseverance, against the more flagrant offences they see their rulers committing, to the serious injury of religion, morals, and public prosperity? Why should they *seem*, by their timid silence, their dastardly acquiescence, to court the evils of continued aggression, the calamities of political slavery? Especially, why should the churches, regardless

alike of their high destiny, their precious trust, and their peculiar responsibility, pursue a temporizing policy, breathe a servile spirit, inculcate slavish maxims, and give rise to the vile reproach which has been too well founded in *past* ages, that they have dug the grave of freedom beside the pulpits of the clergy? Let us hope they have begun generally to show a different temper in their relation to the governing powers; and that those who stand forward the instructors of the community in a religion which fosters the natural love of liberty, and represses the arrogance of misused authority, will henceforth avoid that *mean subserviency*, which is equally unworthy the office to which they have been raised, and injurious to the people over whose religious, moral, and intellectual interests they have been appointed to preside.

7. *Citizens are bound to resist their rulers when they cease to serve the ends for which they have been employed.* No doubt, *obedience*, to the utmost extent compatible with a conscientious regard to the will of God, is a duty of indispensable obligation. It is so essential to the preservation of order, the security of property, the encouragement of industry, and the enjoyment of all the great interests for which the social union has been established, that no truly wise men will ever withhold it, so long as they can render it, without being chargeable with guilt. But, surely, there *are* limits within which obedience to the arbitrary orders of immoral rulers ought to be confined,—limits beyond which resistance becomes a duty, to the performance of which they should be

willing to sacrifice private ease, public tranquillity, and even personal safety. Without going minutely into the subject, I offer the following remarks.

The law of self-preservation dictates resistance to bad rulers. If passive subjection, even under their worst acts, were the duty of their miserable slaves, why have mankind been endowed with an original principle that stimulates them, even without previous deliberation, to efforts in their own defence? Why, on receiving an injury from any of their fellow-men, does *instinctive* anger rise in their bosoms, and urge them, even without the aid of reasoning, to guard against a repetition of similar wrongs, if not to inflict chastisement for past offences? Why are they provided with the power, subject to certain restrictions, of protecting themselves against any sudden violence with which they are threatened, and of preventing, by suitable precautions, any future attack which they may dread from irritated malice, wounded pride, or rancorous revenge? One should think, *those* act in the very face of this original principle,—indeed trample in the dust this wise provision of their moral constitution,—who can see their dearest rights trodden down, and their noblest privileges wrested away, by the gigantic strides of despotism, without offering to move a limb, or an arm, or a tongue, or a pen in their own defence. Such dastardly submission is not required by the British constitution. "The last auxiliary right of the subject, that I shall at present mention," says Blackstone, "is that of having arms for their defence, suitable to their condition and degree, and such as are allowed

by law. Which is also declared by the statute 1 W. and M. st. 2. c. 2., and is, indeed, a *public allowance, under due restrictions, of the natural right of resistance and self-preservation,* when the sanctions of society and laws are found insufficient to restrain the violence of oppression."*

Justice sanctions resistance to bad rulers. Justice consists in giving to all parties that which is due. But, if citizens who constitute the community for whose good, rulers have been chosen to the offices which they fill, and who possess the *physical strength,* without which, the decrees of rulers are nothing but mere pieces of parchment,—if *they* see their country degraded, plundered, oppressed, are not they chargeable with *injustice* to her, if they do not fly to her rescue, concentrate their efforts for the overthrow of tyranny, which has grown up, by degrees, to its overwhelming strength, and sacrifice their minor differences to the great object of erecting a better system under which all shall enjoy returning prosperity? What is the course pursued in parallel, though inferior, cases? When servants have proved that they cannot fulfil the work for which they were engaged, owing either to indolence, or obstinacy, or incapacity, and when they are removed, that others, properly qualified, may take their places, as speedily as the new arrangements will allow, is this ever accounted an act of injustice by any reasonable person? No more is it an act of injustice to depose rulers, who are just the servants of

* Vol. I. 143, 144.

the country, with whatever titles they are dignified, whenever they show, that they have other ends in view than the public weal, and are prepared to hazard the most illegal proceedings,—the most oppressive measures,—in order to execute their evil designs. This is the just use " of those *extraordinary* recourses to first principles which," according to Blackstone, " are necessary when the contracts of society are in danger of dissolution, and the law proves too weak a defence against the violence of fraud or oppression. *Resistance is justifiable* to the person of the prince when the being of the state is endangered, and the public voice proclaims such resistance necessary. Indeed, it is found, by experience, that whenever the unconstitutional oppressions, even of the sovereign power, advance, with gigantic strides, and threaten dissolution to a state, mankind will not be reasoned out of the feelings of humanity; nor will they sacrifice their liberty by a scrupulous adherence to those political maxims which were originally established to preserve it."*

Expediency on this subject coincides with justice. Nothing is clearer from history, than that *tyranny continued* is fatal to the highest interests of society. It restricts the freedom of public worship. It infringes the right of private judgment. It discourages the free circulation of knowledge on all those subjects that are calculated either to improve, to elevate, or to delight the mind. It suppresses the benevolent affections, from which spring the generous

* Vol. I. 245, 251.

offices that sweeten, refine, and exalt the intercourse of life. It damps the ardour of scientific discovery, of useful invention, of commercial enterprise. It obscures truth, degrades morality, and destroys happiness. Incorruptible patriots and faithful believers it throws into dungeons, robs of their property, banishes to inhospitable shores, or tortures with cruel sufferings. Man, the prince of this lower creation, the priest of nature, it converts into a trained sycophant, or a trembling slave. "Degenerated beyond recal, and polluted beyond hope, a people under this influence sinks into remediless ruin; and only continues to exist until mercy is wearied out by their profligacy, and reluctantly gives the sign for vengeance to sweep them away." When such a *monster* makes its appearance in a country, who that has one spark of patriotism in his bosom, would shrink from the requisite efforts to effect its destruction, that he may save himself, his cotemporaries, and his posterity from its pestiferous influences, its dreadful calamities?

Nor are we without *scriptural authority* for the doctrine we are now inculcating. To the Scriptures, I am aware, have the advocates of *passive obedience*—a gross misnomer as well as a degrading dogma—frequently appealed for what they reckoned irresistible proofs. Ecclesiastics, when the minions of depotic power, have usually been the greatest traitors to that volume of which they were, by profession, the official guardians. It is sickening to read the slavish effusions *they* have poured forth, from hearts that no generous emotion had ever warmed,

and no masculine conceptions had ever ennobled. We recall them, not merely as the libellers of the mighty dead who "*spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost,*" but as the betrayers of those "*living oracles*" which have outstripped all religions, in vindicating the natural rights, the acquired privileges, and the becoming independence of man. Look to the apostles, immediately after the ascension of their Lord, commanded by the Jewish rulers to cease preaching Jesus Christ to their countrymen; instead of complying with the unrighteous order, they reply with exemplary boldness, "*whether it be right in the sight of God, to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye.*"* Look to the same apostles, a few days afterwards, again enjoined "that they should not speak in the name of Jesus," lest they should bring upon them the penalties which the rulers had threatened; instead of retiring to their families, they pursue their career with increased vigour, telling their persecutors "*we ought to obey God rather than men,*" and pointing to their exalted Prince in the heavens as one whose laws they were determined to prefer, and with whose approbation they were willing to be contented.† Look to the early Christians, required by pagan governments to sacrifice to the gods which they were honouring; instead of obeying, they resist, rejoice that they are counted worthy to suffer for the name of Jesus, and "take joyfully the spoiling of their goods, knowing in themselves that they have in heaven a better and an en-

* Acts iv. 19. † Acts v. 30, 31.

during substance." Look, in one word, to the *genius* of Christianity, purified from the gross corruptions which have been mixed with it for centuries; is it not *calculated* to foster the natural love of liberty, to elevate above the abject compliances of slavery, to inspire with the generous affections that spurn away the deathlike quiet of despotism, and to strengthen that pure conscientiousness that obeys a higher standard than the enactments of arbitrary rulers, and seeks a nobler reward than the uncertain immunities of earthly kingdoms?

Such are some of the arguments by which a people may vindicate the "last auxiliary right of resistance." Another question, on which we have touched but incidentally, requires very particular attention; and that is, *when are a people warranted to oppose resistance to the government under which they live?* What is the precise point in the destructive career of tyranny at which they are bound by moral obligations to withhold obedience, and employ force for the purpose of introducing a better order of things than that under which they are suffering? I am not insensible to the extreme delicacy of this question—a question from which some have shrunk with a timidity upon which they have, surreptitiously, bestowed the name of prudence, and on which others have spoken with a hesitation that clearly showed their convictions "required confirmation." Desiring that the reader would judge for himself with all the freedom allowed in this age of liberal discussion, I would suggest, as the results of my own reading, that a people are fully warranted to resist their rulers,

in every practicable method, on the *three following conditions.*

The first condition is, that the tyranny under which they are suffering be very considerable. "Not every invasion of the subject's rights, or liberty, or of the constitution; not every breach of promise, or of oath; not every stretch of prerogative, abuse of power, or neglect of duty by the chief magistrate, or by the whole or any branch of the legislative body, *justifies resistance*, unless these crimes draw after them public consequences of sufficient magnitude to outweigh the evils of civil disturbance. Nevertheless, every violation of the constitution ought to be watched with jealousy, and resented as *such*, beyond what the quantity of estimable damage would require or warrant; because a known and settled usage of governing affords the only security against the enormities of uncontrolled dominion, and because this security is weakened by every encroachment which is made without opposition, or opposed without effect."* "The speculative line of demarcation, where obedience ought to end, and resistance must begin, is faint, obscure, and not easily definable. It is not a single act, or a single event, which determines it. Governments must be abused and deranged, indeed, before it can be thought of; and the prospect of the future must be as bad as the experience of the past. When things are in that lamentable condition, the nature of the disease is to indicate the remedy, to those whom nature has qualified to

* Paley's Works, 105.

administer, in extremities, this critical, ambiguous, bitter potion, to a distempered state."* "Whenever the legislators endeavour to take away and destroy the property of the people, or to reduce them to slavery under arbitrary power, they put themselves into a state of war with the people, who are thereupon absolved from any farther obedience, and are left to the common refuge which God hath provided for all men, against force and violence. Whensoever, therefore, the legislative shall transgress the fundamental rule of society, and, either by ambition, fear, folly, or corruption, endeavour to grasp themselves, or put into the hands of any other, an absolute power over the lives, liberties, and estates of the people; by this breach of trust they forfeit the power the people put into their hands for quite contrary ends, and it devolves to the people, who have a right to resume their original liberty, and, by the establishment of a new legislative, provide for their own safety and security, which is the end for which they are in society."†

A second condition is, that the tyranny by which they are oppressed appear quite incurable by gentler means than resistance. Resistance has been very justly termed *the last resource.* So long as there is any hope of inducing rulers to correct gross abuses, and rescind arbitrary decrees, by petitioning, by remonstrating, by expressing public sentiment in any

* Burke's Works, vol v. 73.

† Locke's Works, vol. v. 469, 470.

peaceable form, there ought to be no appeal to *force*. It is only when they refuse the redress sought according to the forms of established law, and manifest a determination to *perpetuate*, during an indefinite period, the afflicting tyranny of which they have shown nothing more than the beginning, that they forfeit their right to the power with which they have been intrusted, and incur deposition by any means, not criminal, that can most speedily secure the object. "For," says Locke, "when the injured party may be relieved, and his damages repaired, *by appeal to the law*, there can be no pretence for force, which is only to be used where a man is intercepted from appealing to the law."* But, how seldom is it possible to arrest the course, far less to effect the overthrow of tyranny, by means of legal forms, especially when those interested in the preservation of abuses are a large body. "To abandon usurped power, to renounce lucrative error, are sacrifices which the virtue of *individuals* has, on some occasions, offered to truth; but from any *society* of men no such effort can be expected. The corruptions of a society, recommended by common utility, and justified by universal practice, are viewed by its members without shame or horror; and reformation never proceeds from themselves, but is always forced upon them by some foreign hand."† "No important political improvement was ever obtained in a period of tranquillity. The corrupt interest of the governors is so

* Works, vol. v. 461.

† Robertson's History of Scotland, vol. i. 129, 130.

strong, and the cry of the people so futile, that it were vain to expect it. If the effervescence of the popular mind is suffered to pass away without effect, it would be absurd to expect from languor what enthusiasm has not obtained. Whatever is good ought to be pursued at the moment it is attainable. The public voice, irresistible in a period of convulsion, is contemned with impunity, when dictated by that lethargy into which nations are lulled by the tranquil course of their ordinary affairs. The ardour of reform languishes in unsupported tediousness. It perishes in an impotent struggle with adversaries who receive new strength from the progress of the day. No hope of great political improvement, (let us repeat it,) is to be entertained from tranquillity, for its natural operation is to strengthen all those who are interested in perpetuating abuse."*

A third condition, without which the two already mentioned could not warrant resistance, is, that they have a rational prospect of success in a combined attempt to overthrow the existing tyranny. It is not enough that they have a good cause worth their adoption,—a cause which they can plead on the broad grounds of justice, expediency, and enlarged humanity,—a cause on which they can invoke the blessing of the Supreme Ruler, and the benedictions of all good men. It is necessary, also, to calculate whether they possess *means* sufficient, so far as they can foresee, to make that cause triumph,—the intelligence, the heroism, the treasure, and the

* Mackintosh's Vindiciæ Gallicæ, 106, 107, 108.

physical force, which are the ordinary instruments used, by providence, for the recovery of national liberty. Should their means, after accurate calculation, appear adequate, they may prepare for action without unnecessary delay. But, should they be evidently inadequate, prudence requires that they defer the momentous movement till some future period. "The lawfulness of resistance, or the lawfulness of a revolt, does not depend alone upon the grievance which is sustained or feared, but also upon the *probable expense and event* of the contest. They who concerted the revolution in England were justifiable in their counsels, because, from the apparent disposition of the nation, and the strength and character of the parties engaged, the measure was likely to be brought about with little mischief or bloodshed."* "It is not tyranny alone which qualifies rebellion, but tyranny in circumstances in which rebellion against its cruel and degrading power affords a prospect of *success*, not merely in the removal of a single tyrant, but in the establishment of a happier system. Without the high probability of a *great preponderance of good*, it cannot be morally right, in any circumstances, even of the most afflicting tyranny, to encourage a disobedience, which the good that is to flow from it alone can justify. In the despotisms of the east, and in all the savage despotisms in which men, accustomed to look on power as something that is to be endured, obey as brutally as they are brutally governed, what virtue

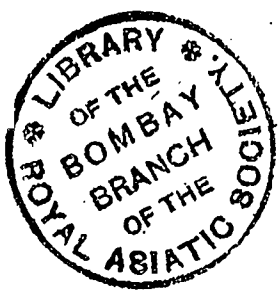
* Paley's Works, 105.

could there be in raising a few wretches, to attempt what could not but fail in *their* hands, even if their number were comparatively greater, and in thus producing a *few* more murders, and a little more terror, than would have existed but for the foolish effort?"*

True fortitude is seen in great exploits,
Which justice warrants, and which wisdom guides;—
All else is tow'ring phrenzy and distraction.

* Brown's Lectures, vol. iv. 379, 380.

THE END.



Edinburgh: Printed by A. Balfour & Co. Niddry Street.

00027385

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 02 January, 2016